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## **SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE**



# **SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE**

**BY**

**Stephen Berrien Stanton**

**Author of "The Essential Life"**



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## **SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE**



## MOODS AND MOTIVES

**S**ENTIMENT is a citadel that long defies all intellectual onslaught; what is founded on affection stands. Most great social movements receive their strength from some emotion which they awaken or moral principle with which they are allied. Instinct and feeling intrench the fundamentals, tradition and art perpetuate them; the heart is a natural conservative. It is by virtue of their imaginative resonance that titles continue; the ancient seats of the aristocracy are the bulwark of the institution. Power should always preserve its *situs*: by clinging to Rome the papacy has strengthened its spiritual sway.

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The mind is energized by emotion: until the spark of motive ignites it, we remain inert. To no bidding but that of the heart will the intellect respond; whom opposition cannot weaken, discouragement may wilt. We are but latently ourselves till roused; until emotionally played upon we do not know the grandeur of our music. The fierce flame of feeling transmutes thought into a new element.

Sentiment is our normal response to facts, and argues the soul's full health; but sentimentality is pathological because a response to mere fancies. The philistinism of the world regards all feeling as a weakness, and on developing any symptom of it slinks off alone like a sick animal. Yet if the mind were to follow merely its own sequences, it would have no sprightliness or spring. Only enthusiasm and love scale heights:

## MOODS AND MOTIVES

the great verities are laid hold of by those of strong sentiment. Large thought and large love condition each other: we mistrust the mind if we suspect the motive. Men are vouched for who have found a friend to trust them, a woman to love them.

The removal of how little earth liberates its subterranean waters: through the emotions we realize our consanguinity. A more lasting bond than any agreement of intellects is compatibility of sympathies. Because the reminder is more fundamental and hence more frequent, those that touch us on the side of our emotional experiences are the most vividly remembered. To be spiritually akin is to be proof against inconstancy; the cords of the heart bind firm. Time can only extend the area of companionship for those that have a common attitude and responsiveness

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toward life; but basic divergences of character show the more as circumstances develop them, and increasingly lessen the field of intercourse.

Mood is the imperative ego that makes us listen to ourselves. The great deep wishes are needs that assert themselves. Determinative of what we do is the profundity with which we feel it. Nothing is accomplished save *con amore*: let the professional begin by becoming an amateur. ‘While I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue.’ All large outlines of life are sketched by the kindling moment of genius; those that labour over things that they do not feel like, at times when they do not feel like them, are merely the lesser men that fill in the detail. We must be spiritually self-indulgent to be greatly expressive, for the only creative condition is mood.

## MOODS AND MOTIVES

The finer-tuned the soul, the more uplifted or prostrated by its moods; hence its greater need—and usually its greater power—to control them and to command the one found prolific.

Too much do men subordinate their inward requirements to outward exigencies, thereby submitting the greatness of the soul to the littleness of circumstance. Our stay should not be regulated by the hour, nor our sojourn by the term of the lease, but rather by the profitableness of our thought: the slant not of the sun but of our efficiency tells the true time of day. Disposition is the soul's sex; and the sky of beauty or dreariness is spread over every scene by the meteorological conditions of the heart. If we were always summer within, we should not need the tropics of luxury. Few modes of life lead to our consummation that are not founded

on functional and psychological necessities rather than on mere external convenience or suitability.

Timeliness makes everything agreeable. Useless is it to coax the unmatured day; so ample in season are all things, though out of season so scanty. Why demand of time what it does not yet contain? Most unwelcomeness of task is due to some anachronism of taste: repugnance toward it implies no inherent lack of merit on its part or relish on ours but merely an unreadiness of relationship. The gradual rearrangement effected by time in all relations cures every disproportion or distaste; we become suited to life less by any moral *tour de force* than by our inevitable change of attitude. Delight is born and dies at the creative moment; if the mood-current is cut off, the whole mind-system is tied up. Radiant under

## MOODS AND MOTIVES

the sun of enthusiasm, without it the world looks gray and forbidding. We waste time tacking against antagonism when by waiting for the wind of favour we might sail so much faster. Confronted at last by our outlawed duties, how amazed we are at the mildness of their visage. The perpendicularity of heights is deceptive: few ascents are so steep but that there is foothold. Though a gradual climb doubles the distance, it halves the difficulty: the short cut of effort pays its penalty of fatigue, whereas the winding way of inclination saves many a foolish scramble. The season has no need to force its flowers: a little patience brings profusion. Whatever its attempt, untimeliness butts its head against needless walls of obstruction and wades through superfluous waters of discouragement and hindrance; whereas experience

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soon levels all ways and quenches all  
floods and gives us to walk everywhere  
smoothly and dry-shod.

## THE IVY OF SIMPLICITY

NORMAL life needs no incitements: there must be something amiss when conditions require sugar-coating. The world is a feast to the fresh appetite. Ornament, perfume, jewels, entertainment are so many badges of deficit. If we find the coffee and cigars of existence indispensable, we can know little of its real gusto. Simplicity is an ivy that pleases more by its mere leaf than many-flowered luxury. Drilling and dancing demand music; without drums and fifes, bugles and bunting, we could not hold the recruits; but in its natural functions and relationships, life is self-inviting.

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From the commonplace surfaces and spheres of existence its glory is refracted as beautifully as from any brilliant of privilege or wealth. Nature surrounds even the penniless with a magnificence denied to Croesus in his habitation of extravagance. A double tide sets toward simplicity: the growing unsatisfactoriness of the exceptional and artificial is joined and augmented by a growing interest in the usual and natural. Complexity of living consumes its whole appropriation in mere cost of administration; whereas in simple experiences we get full return for life. The acquaintances and doings of fashion force us to turn our back upon ourselves: we obtain sustenance only when we forsake the banquet. The rich find simplicity as restorative as the poor find it life-giving. Abstemiousness is the consistent sybarite: in the dry crust of

## THE IVY OF SIMPLICITY

existence we find its full deliciousness of flavour. One observes in all men of experience an increasing simplicity of life and democracy of manner.

The rose of love covers every wall on which we train it; whenever fate assigns us to any little patch of life, how happy are we in our garden. One quickly becomes so absorbed in embellishing his conditions that he loses all thought of altering them: women embroider every garment of existence. Perfection is too large a canvas: we cannot handle the huge. Chiefly along its delimitation and in its confinements lies the charm of the sea. Enjoyment like investigation revolts at mass: to taste or to test needs only a sip. Minutiæ have the same composition as their multiple and are more easily dissolved on the palate of perception. The pleasure of existence grows with

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its paucity, hence often with our poverty. All experiences that rob us of our trinkets enrich us; we seldom feel like prosecuting the thievery of time. Elision gladdens life by simplifying it. Men become roomier with every breaking up of the home; happiness becomes ampler when obliged to pack up and leave. It is by ridding us of our superfluities that travel gives us back the essentials: trunks holding our bare necessities are more capacious than a whole house. The itinerant alone has great possessions and is often wealthier than his benefactor. Men of substance drown in the oil of their own richness: the bars protecting wealth imprison its owner. Joy is a gypsy that pines away in the captivity of satiety.

The cheeriness of the local silences the call of the distant; by our inertia is our restlessness finally overcome.

## THE IVY OF SIMPLICITY

Though the far view may look over and beyond the surrounding ugliness, it also overlooks and loses the near-by beauty. Experience soon sees how surely the foreign fades into the familiar, and feels thereafter a comparative indifference toward its whereabouts. To be conscious that something is amiss is no proof that anything else would suit us better; wise men recognize in their own troubles the symptoms of a universal malady. The background of life being everywhere alike, a change in its foreground little alters the scene.

We accost few things at their moment of fulness: the fruit is seldom plucked at perfection; the flowers offered us are either buds or blown. Beyond the point where the view first pleases, let us hesitate how we press on, lest we not only fail to enhance but entirely miss it. In decisions one generally continues to

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wait for more determining data, only to find that he must decide on what he had all along. Delay of enjoyment endangers it; once pass its offer by and eventually in a panic of losing it altogether we grasp at its mere minimum. We are always going to make a ten-strike so never make any at all: in waiting for the two birds of occasion we lose the one stone of opportunity.

The less our happiness depends on, the more certain is its tenure: we enjoy the income only of an unquestioned fortune. Risk ruins all. Though danger may spice the dish, it also deprives us of it: we take but a wan pleasure in what we think we are about to lose. Let us withdraw sentiment into a citadel of safety. There is no satisfaction to be derived from anything that is out of accord with the general permissiveness of environment or event.

## THE IVY OF SIMPLICITY

Every special bower of bliss is precarious; except as derived from the common lot of mankind, happiness has no peace of mind. When we care for the unfortunate we insure ourselves; short of socialism society cannot feel secure. True normalness is to have no quarrel with fate, to enjoy fact as such, and to look solely to the inalienable incident of life for its rewards. Outdated customs, reactionary theories, antiquated methods keep their adherents in perpetual trepidation and unrest. It is the only peace to live the truth, the only joy to express it.

In what we are spared consists our good fortune more than in the uttermost gifts of fate; the greatest blessings of all go unappreciated except by the imaginative few. Only occasionally on the cessation of some terror or torment are one's eyes opened to the

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true nature of happiness. Think what it is to struggle for the breath that now feeds the lungs so easily as to be unconscious; think of the racking pain of which these now quiet nerves are capable. We who walk level places, do we call to mind those who skirt the edge of abysses or work suspended over sickening heights? The unprized freedom of muscle and limb, how would one not ache for it if immured, if bound, if clutched by paralysis; from what torture of fierce flame or biting cold does not every-day temperature save us. Merely in being assured of our exemptions, not in obtaining any positive benefaction, lies the immeasurable happiness. Gratitude is under no greater obligation than for the placid flow of time and the pleasant and profitable course of thought. If we could but realize to what an over-

## THE IVY OF SIMPLICITY

whelming proportion of mankind our lot is an object of covetous longing, we should be never-ceasingly mindful of our advantages instead of deplored any we may lack. Men bemoan their fate and call Heaven to witness their misery, and behold envious eyes are fastened upon them the while.

How savoury comes life to market. We get from its fresh produce the odour of earth's original spice, and carry thence greens of refreshment. The natural features of the landscape are a mental equivalent for the crowds and squares and excitement of cities. Health is enough. No pleasure that menaces it is comparable to the pleasure of itself. A brisk step is the gayety of life, and quick blood the joy of living. There is no material success but health and the opportunity to enjoy it. We ask rightly, how are you, not how are your

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affairs. As the world looks different to us when we rise and when we go to bed, even such is the difference between vigour and the lack of it. But thinly does the upholstery of comfort cover the hardships of existence—scarcely even does it conceal their framework; whereas health reclines in the everlasting arms.

Civilization has forgotten its ploughed ground. Man lives in mere restaurants of existence and is clothed ready-made. The kitchen, the loom, the threshing-floor have been screened from sight. We are accustomed to be waited on by nature: all supplies appear in response to the press-button of demand. Not often is attention drawn to original processes, and the wood of reality is veneered beyond recognition.

The essentials so few, the superfluities so many; how little fails us, see-

## THE IVY OF SIMPLICITY

ing the earth and the stars are secure! If we did only the healthful, what happiness; if we did only the important, what peace! Moderation spends the day solvently and calls on time for no advancement. The steady candle of life burns with even rim down to its socket. There is no way in which we can help the world so much as by setting up an example of normal, moderate living. Let us build ourselves around some central court of beauty in which our fountain of refreshment plays, so that men looking in through the window of our eyes may catch a passing glimpse of it.

## THE ARTESIAN SOUL

CONSCIOUSNESS is a stream upon whose surface we see the reflection of many things that are themselves hidden. The mind possesses a knowledge more basic than any acquired through the brain; the forms are provided and have but to be filled in. We can comprehend only what we knew already: education simply develops the ideas we bring to it, and marshals our innate wisdom. All experience is a gradual coming to self-consciousness.

Men cannot tell from the music of our lips what is played in our heart. Words like icebergs have their massiveness submerged; one's profound im-

## THE ARTESIAN SOUL

pressions lie embedded beyond ready perception and therefore beyond easy expression. Strong principles act silently; the wise man lives his wisdom, the foolish preaches it. All progress must make a draft upon the unrealized self. We find ourselves but a threshold and 'look for one who is to come.' With closed sense and open thought we approach the truth. Our best gifts remain gifts, not to be counted on; the goal of genius is ever an Atlantis of fortuitous finding set in some western sea of unconsciousness and yet uncharted.

Only the surface smarts; the deep hurt is hidden. We receive the fatal thrust unflinchingly because unknowingly; we look men quietly in the eye while their tongue stabs us in the back. Fate serves its process upon us as we go about our usual avocations and we

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

receive suddenly intimations of the truth. The world wonders what ails us and cannot account for the abrupt change that unconsciously comes over us; it had not observed the flash that opened our eyes and influences the whole after-course of our life. Forebodings respond to an inner sensitiveness as the trembling leaf is the sole evidence of the breeze it feels. The light touch of some casual word will often twang the harp with a tone of hope or fear that, unheard of others, sounds on through our soul.

If we would but suppress our littleness, men would ask no further proof of our greatness. The rose is faultless till it opens. It is only wisdom that will not hang itself if given enough rope. We lavish affection not so much on those who deserve it as upon those who do nothing to alienate it; hence

## THE ARTESIAN SOUL

the absurd devotion to pets. What repute one gains simply by not dispelling illusions concerning him.

In the silence of circumstance, the essential speaks. Let us pierce to the artesian strata of the soul. The flowing wells of speech spring only from the deep basin of experience; the waters must long gather and stand before a clear stream of truth emerges. By avoiding effusiveness we keep our dignity intact; reserve stamps us with our own value. It is the withheld approval for which men strive. Statelessness, that magnificent poplar, keeps its flag of enthusiasm furled and cased; the mountain of majesty overawes because seldom unsheathed from the cloud-scabbard of the sky. Unless at times covered, the peak of favour is not appreciated; there are some compliments that only cheapen their makers.

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

Graciousness evaporates where it is not bestowed restrainedly; what is not girt up disgusts. How jealous should men be not to dim their lustre! We concede any greatness to the great, and are pathetically anxious to believe all good of those who have once obtained our credence. Easier is it to doubt genius altogether than to doubt its boundlessness. What is illustrious seems unlimited.

Thought is a wave that dances for a moment in the sunlight and then subsides again into the ocean of subconsciousness from which it emerged. If men reap only the surface of their mood, they gather a quick crop of complacency; but when they stir the deeper soil of disposition, they raise the full harvest of their soul. Little should we ever know about ourselves unless put to the proof of performance. Conduct turns

## THE ARTESIAN SOUL

us inside out and shocks self-content. Every unwonted situation reveals in us unsuspected weaknesses and faults; how often the flash-light of a new experience shows us the rocks upon which we were drifting. Only through agitation can one winnow out his chaff. In silence and inactivity evil may lurk unnoticed, but speech and action bring one's flaws into sight. There is no spiritual assurance without self-disclosure.

Mere potentiality exaggerates itself; it is delusion more than boastfulness that makes us brag of what we 'could do if we would.' Only the attempt convinces us of our incompetence; by disclosing its disability the effort first exposes our shortage. Unconsciousness is an ambush. The defect we can still notice is not yet dangerous; but what eludes detection, eludes correction—the undefinable is ineradicable. It is the

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

unpublished floating debt of some overlooked fault that forces us finally to bankruptcy. Our sins bring us to book not by betraying us, but by insidiously limiting our possibilities so that we cannot, though within sight of it, enter our promised land. Life is a long search after what on finding we must forego. It is only when we reach out for the topmost rung of the ladder of success that our subtler failings catch us. The chain of limitation is not felt till we go its full length.

Deep influences not only defy analysis but rarely invite attention: what is basic in us is generally beyond consciousness altogether. Only empirically are we from time to time made aware how profound a hold persons and places have taken upon us. It is when the scene has ceased to be scenery that it becomes a spiritual background and

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a real factor in our lives. Things of vital import so change our point of view that themselves are unnoticed: every great storm shifts the channels of experience.

No man has ever yet pushed to the headwaters of his soul or climbed to the sources of his inspiration. Our acquaintance is with our results rather than with our *modus operandi*: impossible is it with the eye to see into the eye. Just as we cannot sleep for trying to, so by our efforts to incite thought we limit it; ideas do not alight, because we will not let them. The conscious wires get crossed, but the deep conduit of subconsciousness carries an undissipated current and delivers an untampered-with message. Only when the passenger travel of self ceases does the mind move its freight.

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

Every great spiritual vitality feeds upon some radioactivity of unknown energies and properties at the pith of its power: the heart worships before some hidden holy that may not be unveiled or named. Of this nature are the reserve of refinement and the reticence of strength. It is the charm of children that they are still transparent to the bottom of their being—like all sensitive surfaces the soul in self-protection soon veils over. We are dumb in the presence of those who would draw us out. The attempt to make sentiment articulate despoils it: by phrasing we exploit and so deplete. Let us take up the rich grape of happiness into our blood and not babble it forth in dissipation. In the silent memory, things remain green; but when utterance lets in the light of reality,

## THE ARTESIAN SOUL

they instantly wither. The stream of influence dries up when we denude its source of the forest of unconsciousness surrounding it.

## LIFE AT LONG RANGE

**G**REAT aims include the lesser as an upper road commands a lower. By fulfilling ourselves, we are most faithful to family and country. Humanitarianism is the true patriotism: he is the patriot whose life, under whatever sky, honours humanity. All obligations to our fellow-men are implicated in our obligations to ourselves, and are therein most effectively discharged. If we but strike at once to the heart of a problem, its subsidiary difficulties vanish. The preliminaries are dispensed with by the incidentals. When men gain heaven, earth is thrown in. Mountain ascents suspend our hill-climbing: we do not need to ape men's

## LIFE AT LONG RANGE

acts if we emulate their motives; the expedition covers the ground of the excursion en route. All large activities are timely; but punctuality is an exaggeration of the unessential. Results we had despaired of come about naturally when some commanding interest marshals them; the muscles are not fatigued by a task which would have tired them had it not been part of a greater achievement. The keystone of purpose turns our separately useless capacities into an arch of strength.

Every circumstance of beauty seems beatified: the odour of divinity clings to its garments. A great act like a lovely face justifies and exalts all its adjuncts. We suffer any defect in those we love. Incidents are swallowed up in outcome; when the event is full-blown, how empty is the letter-packet or newspaper-file. There is little use

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for logic outside the court-room of analysis: the world wants conclusions and cares little for the arguments.

Amplification answers all questions; supplementation supplants all reasons. It is neither necessary nor natural for fine souls to insist, because they are themselves convincing and prejudice in favour of the truth. By a word they both enliven and are enlivened; to them or from them a mere tone tells. Many causes are espoused for their exponents' sake, and theories often decided on personalities. We reach only what we go beyond, and do surpassingly only what we ourselves surpass. Effort cannot be hooked over the eye of intent except by exceeding it. Proficiency comes of easy power.

We may make port in any wind, if we enter on the right tack. All that we are loving toward brings us its gift.

## LIFE AT LONG RANGE

Work is an imaginary taskmaster: when we try the alternatives, we find necessity to be our choice. Obligation is but opportunity under another name; the sunlight of love snuffs out the rush-light of duty: we may carry our burdens without their weight. All things are tinged by the purpose with which they are pursued; the subjective side of the act characterizes it to us. What resistance made repugnant, willingness makes attractive; so ready is relish if only opinion permit. Within our consciousness lies a cure for all unhappiness; from all injustice reason is a refuge. Accepted starvations feed us and the unresisted bitter draughts refresh: even death is recognized as a brother when it is unhorsed and unmasked. No situation is so bad but that there is some precedent to salve it; there is always some philosophy

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

that fits the occasion and brings relief.

Misfortune forces us to a more comprehensive truth and thereby glorifies the commonplace. The steep hill-sides of difficulty lend themselves to beautiful treatment better than any evenness of ease. How little credit untoward circumstances get for all the good they do us—making us not only more useful to others but also more agreeable to ourselves. The luscious pear of character ripens best in the drawer of obscurity. It is defeat that disciplines, victory that perverts: the temperance bred of the struggle forgets itself in the intoxication of success. Little mishaps, by warning, withdraw us from the greater: reverses serve as signals of recall, keeping us from occupying untenable positions as well as from following up a pursuit too far. What-

## LIFE AT LONG RANGE

ever upsets self-satisfaction makes us far worthier of it: nations worsted by a foreign foe invariably turn to constitutional changes or administrative betterment. All attack from without hastens reform within.

There are many ill consequences that are good symptoms: weeds are a recommendation of the soil and prove the possibilities of rich growth. Unless having in it a place for failure, no philosophy is life-proof. Evil's second crop may be good. An opportunity is not wholly lost if it teaches us to recognize it next time. Of unexpected profitableness are the hours we feared wasted; our strayings of thought or speech contribute to some purpose which at the time we had not in view. What a discipline to temper is this troublesome neighbour; and that discursive friend—to what feats of con-

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

centration does he not force us. Within the mind there is a pigeon-hole of unassortment, a garret of miscellany, filled with experiences that are without immediate classification or use, for which a fitting place, however, is eventually found. Our ideas lie waiting, like letters, at a window of general delivery, where their expectant relevancies will surely call.

Those that grasp the large intent of life find in every incident a meaning and a profit; to them, therefore, everything is worth while and all time well occupied. They lay down the pen as readily as they take it up, for they see in the interruption only a wider inclusion. We are never so busy as when every feature of existence contributes material: all experience is then a study, every place a studio. When we find use for the waste of self, we carry con-

## LIFE AT LONG RANGE

servation of energy into the spiritual world, and cube life. It were possible for a well-arranged schedule of occupation to make of every act a means to happiness and advancement. The monotony of manual tasks might be turned into a delightful variation from intellectual labour, if they were reserved and undertaken for that purpose; much of our brain-work could be kept as a welcome relief to bodily activity and thereby cured of the weariness incidental to its uninterrupted pursuit. By being led athletically, life would become self-restorative, and agreeable in all its walks.

All things are beautiful either as jewel or as foil. The programme of every intelligent reform is not to destroy but simply to assign to its proper place. One recognizes in the great deed or beautiful work of art a profitable use of something he has himself slighted.

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

The reason ‘all things work together for good’ to the righteous is that they force them to. Things are not so much amiss as misplaced; nothing is useless except what we misuse. The same rain that houses fashion is the fisherman’s luck.

Outward inclemency drives to inward calm: inside the reef where the sea runs is a lagoon of still waters. The climate of fortune is beyond control, but in the heart a constant temperature of happiness may be maintained. Dreary surroundings draw from us our own ideality. Any uncongenial conditions or unsympathetic companionship force us to the development of inner resources. It is when the day of circumstance is reduced to its darkest that we study the stars of intellectual vision: when rebuffed, we bring up our reserves. Happenings are wholly re-

## LIFE AT LONG RANGE

fractory, and life's only level is found in our equableness of mood. As the bird delights in buffeting the storm, the beast in battling for food, so let us exult in the arena of difficulties.

## THE WASTEFULNESS OF WORRY

THE misuse of strength sets up correctionally a greater demand for it; but its due exercise restores at the same time that it fatigues, and fills as fast as it empties. Worry takes but does not contribute; haste hurries nowhither but to the grave. Only by those that are lusty over them are the doughty deeds done; energy is always optimistic. How can the sick heart exude health, or the soul that itself needs cure be curative? Unless we are sunny we do not warm the world.

What troubles us consumes us; we burn without heat, we flame without light. When thought drifts upon the rocks of anxiety, we cannot float whith-

## THE WASTEFULNESS OF WORRY

er we would to seaward. Ambition is no bait for the big fish of character; nothing great rises to the fly of reward. By exacting too much from ourselves, we get not more but less: strain distorts normal dimensions. There is no effective cure for the harassed and driven except in omission; only a willingness to forego is capable of poise. The day's respite and the night's sleep are also Sabbaths which we must remember to keep holy. God's gifts do not have to be wrung from Him. Whatever our exertions, we can do no more than give out the quotient of good that is in us: solicitude merely diminishes the quantity and dilutes the quality. The patient taking of all as it comes, without concern other than to derive its whole use and enjoyment, produces our utmost. Not smiles but an unwrinkled brow betokens happiness.

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Speed lashes the sea astern of it, fretting roughens it only in front: the easier we take things the more we accomplish. It is not the pace that kills so much as our anxiety to adopt or keep it—the nerves, not the muscles, offend. Reasons for disquietude are at best reasons for diligence. True progress leaves no track of refuse, but a beautiful wake of marbled waters. The high-strung are musical; the over-strung need tuning. Like a hideous straight road, hurry cuts off the very curves and corners that constitute the charm of living; highways, on the other hand, serving their adjacent country undergo as they proceed those changes of immediate objective that give, both in direction and character, a pleasing variety of route.

Men are in such haste that they shorten the very reprieve of time:

## THE WASTEFULNESS OF WORRY

hurry and worry are the veritable dance of death. Nothing matters but its mattering. Worry causes worse evils than it wards off; hurry retards life—however much it may hasten the thing in hand. Only complacency is efficient or safe. Though we are needlessly fearful, we seldom anticipate the fatality: we are not on the bridge when the collision occurs. Even the over-anxious are not exempt—at best they clear themselves of contributory negligence.

It is, after all, the merest fringe of difficulties and uncertainties that causes us concern, as the smallest customer is the most troublesome. Little things bother us more than large not only because we can do more about them but also because attention meets them first: the immediate engages us to the exclusion of the remote. Upon the crisp leaf of detail every soft foot-fall

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

seems a crushing tread. Though the view is still part of our garden, beyond the hill is transalpine: even apprehension is baffled by blindness. The portentous proves to be but the beneficial rain, while the devastating cyclone gives no warning. Like insects we are alert to the movement of molecules, yet inattentive to the step of catastrophe: we watch the ripples but are heedless of the oncoming waves. How self-indulgent is man, how solicitous that conditions should suit all his little sensibilities! yet acting upon him from every side are universal forces and influences that have no regard whatever for his personal preferences. Futile in the face of life's great movements and lifting tides are our pygmy calculations and precautions. What the petty cash of worrisomeness saves is swallowed up in the crash of fate; what trustfulness loses is

## THE WASTEFULNESS OF WORRY

made good by the larger increments of existence.

So puny is haste that it is only petty things to which we apply it—the big are plainly beyond its reach and therefore beyond its blight. Men with most reason for worry least exhibit any, since the very exigencies that would excuse it are so grave as to require its excision. Though art is long, it is less flurried by the sense that time is fleeting: it evokes from the mind its eternal qualities. The moment seems imperious where the trifling event seethes; but great events grant latitude of opportunity. We have only to act as if we had plenty of time, to have it. Eternity belongs to the eternally-minded.

## THE CREST OF INTENSITY

EXCESS is a universal restorative: extremes encounter a natural check from which they recoil. When faults become flagrant, their correction is not far; there is hope when the injustice is glaring. Troubles keep gathering until some lightning-stroke of accentuation precipitates their poignancy and dread, thereby clarifying again the sky of our serenity. Vehement is only the more quickly converted, and never fails to chide itself for unfairness. The *reductio ad absurdum* is an ever-cogent argument. It is only inexperience that is convinced at the top and doubtful at the bottom. At the maximum and mini-

## THE CREST OF INTENSITY

mum of apparent potentiality the turning-point is reached: let us look for reversal whenever long continuance has eliminated all sceptics. The longer we wait the less reason have we for losing hope. Perseverance is a level unbroken by the ups and downs of incident or the unevenness of judgment. The salve of events is the recognition of their temporary character.

Every crest of eagerness curls over into a hollow of aversion. Exaggeration resents itself and for recuperation seeks its antipodes. As love to hate, so relish turns to disgust. It is proverbial that we cry before evening if we begin the day laughing: both because it over-anticipates and because it nervously reacts, elation subsides into depression. There is no cause for wonder in the antitheses of experience, when once we realize the sequential

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character of the relationship. How many pencil-points of purpose are broken by over-sharpening. The clearest vision is quickest clouded; by the slightest use is the keen edge turned. Every western coast of extremity confronts already the east of its opposite: the fool and the hero are closely akin; brilliance ever invites eclipse. From the countryside the clouds, from the city the smoke, rise and obscure the sun. Delicate adjustments suffer constant derangement; the glassy surface of peace may be shattered by a breath. In self-defence and self-disguise fineness recoils and roughens itself: it is always the fairest day that freckles and under a veil of mist conceals the delicacy of its complexion.

We can go but a little way in our own direction without being lost to sight and unable longer to commun-

## THE CREST OF INTENSITY

cate our whereabouts to others. It is the tragedy of all sensitiveness and genius that they may no more fraternize with their fellows or receive the general support of existence. Food is with difficulty brought us in the trenches. All pursuits pushed too far leave us in an exposed position; there is risk of despair when we are cut off from the main body of mankind. Men of one idea become devoid of area: the pulse of the scholar slackens; the outlook of the business man contracts. All specialism is a spoliation and rifles the treasury of existence: it enriches purpose at the expense of the heart—the soul is left juiceless and joyless.

Excess is never relevant in disproof of moderation. Coveted summer proves too cordial, the welcome winter too acute. All that is pressed to pleasure changes its character. Not long

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can the languor of inaction dispense with the habitations of liveliness; the starved ear of silence craves again the metropolis of sound. Upon every one-sidedness of occupation or interest, fatigue itself enforces a limitation: men are often driven into broadening and humanizing themselves in sheer relief and for diversion. Under the open sky of existence we are happy the live-long day: some excessive ardour of interest or act is it that overcasts our joy. How few are the lives in which the clouds of invalidism do not arise and eclipse the sun of strength before its natural setting.

## THE DIGNITY OF EXISTENCE

THROUGH the archway of lofty thought the world is nobly framed. The general aspect injects interest into everything: nothing is small that plays its part. Truth if folded is not perspicuous; but when spread large, each feature of it falls into place as a meaningful factor. A wide word wakens attention and enlists the heart. No fact is unimportant that reiterates an essential truth, no activity belittling unless it limits the mind. Wherever we open life up, we open it out; one has only to go a little further to find an outlet for every ill. Though for much there may seem to be no immediate relief save in forgetfulness,

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yet the supplementation effected by experience always brings eventual relief through subordination—which is itself a kind of forgetfulness. Life does not give us its big answers unless we ask it its big questions. With the elaboration of our branching, our roots strike more firmly into the soil; thought finds itself deeper and deeper as its rising superstructure requires. None but the stably-poised can support the burden of height.

Experience presents itself in detail but explains itself in summation: the day-book of incident requires frequent posting up into the ledger of comprehensiveness. Realism if consistent has no consistency and therefore conveys no meaning; for all entries seem trivial till footed up, balanced and carried forward. Though facts are common to all, the sense of their comparative

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value is individual: it is over the same data that men disagree. Conclusions go astray not so much because of defect in mental process as because attention assembles the ingredients of experience too partially: emphasis keeps too close to self. In thought as in action we need the breadth cure. The sunlight unravels the snarls of worry, and perplexities of prose find their clew of egress in the poetic word. All final solutions come of consulting basic needs and disregarding superficial objections. A wide sense of the appropriate is a wiser judge than any nice calculation of requirement. Incident and occasion are the sole variants—principles are permanent and of universal application. Only plans or decisions made in consonance with underlying causes and tendencies, and with reference to far eventualities rather than to fluctu-

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ations of immediate advantage or disadvantage, prove happy of outcome. Fundamentals show the trend, appearances only its rate of speed. It is good to realize that God speaks to us in the out-doors of a large spirituality rather than in the dark-room of our pettiness; that it is to the pleasant spots we must go to meet Him; that we get further by following hope than by heeding fear.

The concrete is limited both in suggestiveness and in appeal, but the abstract has a world-wide currency. Those who think, see truth in its nakedness and not merely in its incidental dress. We lose sense of direction amid the rank growth of locality and must seek the stranger's point of view for orientation. Any idiom of mind or speech or manner evinces a lack of universal touch; the great give no hint of their century or race. Detail pitches

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its voice in a local key and talks provincially; but to phrase generally is to address mankind and to couch in eternal tones that die not down at the ear. Only large thought is inclusive and therefore conciliatory, keeping us free from the contentious tyranny of the lesser. Where creeds remain catholic schism sets up no rivalry; but when outworn, they send their children forth in search of shelter and momentarily make faith itself an outcast.

Let us not gather life with too short a stem. To limit the field of energy is to limit our possibilities in that field: the farm of the mind must exceed in extent the acre it tills. No man is anything unless he is much more. Exclusiveness of attention reacts upon its fruitfulness; all over-concentration is barren. The specialist is guilty of a species of vivisection, and can never

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restore the live palpitating incidents of truth but at best can cauterize its bleeding incisions. Technicalities tend to blind; the small cloud on the horizon that will overspread and change the entire sky is not often visible to the vaticination of the experts. With greater frequency should focussed eyes look up to the far view. Any over-eagerness of pursuit bends the body and stoops the soul: to keep mentally erect requires a noble disengagedness of purpose. We would grow as straight as the trees did we seek like them the sun. Too specific an object defeats the dream and lowers the flight. Because mistaking itself for far-sight, the near-sight of the learned is the more incurable; none are so shallow as the deep if they think they have fathomed it all. Special competency is enlarged most by general experience; only wide observation can

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apply aptly. Once we can make the batter, we are secret to all the recipes.

Off the coasts of life we see its contour: problems if looked at impersonally are easier to solve. What is detached avoids the roll and pitch of the ship's motion and preserves its own steadiness. How few men think of things beyond the shore of their own share in them. Night is but an averted sphere, shadow our interception of the sun. The universe is eternally clear: there are no clouds beyond the earth's misasma. Fears prove to be specks upon the window of sight. To infuse little life with large thought, this is to philosophize, poetize, dramatize it. Outlook exclaims; extrication always shouts, The sea, the sea!

According to the intelligence that accosts it is the meaning of the world. The universe, like the heaven-dropped

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sheet containing all things, is let down before us and insight is the voice that forbids man to call anything common. To every commonplace specimen the botany of perception lends the participatory interest of its wider classification and relationship. How many eyes besides our own look out upon the scene—birds, beasts, reptiles, insects; yet all of them to so little effect save solely the eye of understanding. Tintern Abbey, theme of the poet's song, æsthetic utterance of religion, goal of secular pilgrimage—is yet to the vine nothing but a wall to climb on, to the red-breasted wren a perch, to the wind a whistle, to the feeding sheep but a shadow and a shelter.

A right point of view is the grip on life. Merely to behold truth and beauty is a joy far exceeding success in any partial occupation. We are spirit-

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ual beings and are tired not by spent muscles but by low moods. Inertia is due to discouragement more often than to laziness: it is lack of energy rather than lack of strength that makes us droop. We are restored philosophically to physical health. I am cured of life every time I am sick. Of troubles is born tranquillity.

Over areas of expanse the air comes large: the fullest life is the freshest. The soul's view is the mind's ventilation—no thought unless happy can be healthy. Philosophy depends for its value upon the experience it summarizes; every true word boxes the compass of the universe. We prize the opinion of certain persons not so much for its own sake as for the sake of the wider body of opinion it reflects. Until the mind makes the grand tour it is not considerable. Breadth like the

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breeze is the kiss of distance and brings from the hygienic tracts of nature the salutary touch. Through the air's own urgence the balm of sea and forest is spread abroad. Let us oxygenate life with leisure; there must be many small parks of occasion in its congested districts of complexity. By the passive mood the active is re-enforced: we march further for the halt. Every holiday heightens hope and stimulates industry.

Material life is shot through with spiritualization. When functions have once acquired a spiritual counterpart they are no longer purely physical; with consciousness love ceased to be sensual. The body's best regimen is provided by the mind's hygiene; our daily bread does not nourish unless received to high purpose. There is no vital factor of experience that does not

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nerve us to some apparently unrelated effort. From mere pastime we get no pleasure, nor from indulgence profit; fiction is frivolous if it simply amuses. Only furtherance justifies. Not in special acts but in a changed attitude toward ordinary acts dwells goodness. The sanctuary is wherever life is led to a divine accompaniment. Thanks at meals are a continual mass; ‘do this as oft as ye shall drink it in remembrance of me.’

It is the province of religion to see the little in its largest relations; there is no means of standardizing one’s self but through contemplation of the total content of existence, and of self with reference thereto—through consideration of what the divine mind would be or do if it operated at the particular point of the whole scheme of things represented by one’s self. Employing

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a psychologically approvable method, the church service distributes attention over the whole range of experience, applying general principles to every conceivable situation or difficulty and thus bringing the soul into harmony with goodness in all its forms and manifestations. If the real nature of religion were not misunderstood, there would be less rancour in its disputes; throughout all such discussions its fundamental values because unchallenged remain unchanged. On the subjective side, not on the objective, is the touch: for being interpreted in terms of spirituality, God is not less God but more. Faith is no cosmic theory but a conscious intimacy—a philosophy and practice of divine relationship. It assumes the attitude and speaks the language not of a separate and ephemeral creature, but of a participant and therefore

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eternal being. Conceiving God as imminent, it believes in a spiritual oneness and continuity rather than in a heaven and a hereafter: it has no need to explain death away, for its belief in spiritual eternity is built on perception of the character of this life rather than on expectation of another. It maintains that the inner vision is a guarantee of the soul's permanence: as even a short walk shows a thousand others worth taking, so a full life evinces the need of eternity for its completion. Great souls believe because they feel their immortality. The mind in its vigour refuses a philosophy of self-stultification.

There will always speak to and through us whatever we heed: to be greatly receptive and perceptive is the best natural endowment and constitutes inborn genius. Intelligent co-

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operation with large forces makes us more efficient than the utmost enlargement of our own. Only small aims take shelter; great aims keep themselves out in the winds and currents, where they are fostered and furthered. Whenever fate unclasps our arms from small objects, we embrace worthier ones. Facts obscure events. Let us lift things into their widest relationship and name them as we do our children after some illustrious kinsman. The south window, the morning room, the sunset seat, the eastward chancel of churches—such associations keep the thought in transcendent touch and give distinction to the mood. We dignify life by making it full-sized. Why not frequent only such places and engage only in such occupations as are of wide suggestion; seek in the voices of the great the echoes of infinity; bare our-

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selves to be played on only by some sweeping touch and withdraw ourselves from the petty fingers? Lord, I spread out myself like a plain before thee and ask that thy sun and storms both warm and temper me—thy winds clear the air of my spirit, thy sunshine evoke the clouds of my homage.

All days of commemoration are days of expansion, and correspond—though they may not always coincide—with the soul's need of self-recollection; anniversaries of notable men rally in us the trait to which their career gave emphasis. Holidays and holy days are no mere memorials but indispensable opportunities for one's own fulfilment: the soul avails itself of every outward occasion for utterance. Worthy commemoration does not look backward to a waning vista but forward to an approaching consummation. To dwell

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in memory shows that we have lost our hold on hope. We honour the past more by augmenting than by remembering it; reverence both kneels and looks up. Better is it to hail the light in its fulness than in the dimness of its reflection, to enjoy life in its beauty than merely in its beatification. We are the greater Greeks and look out upon a larger world with fuller sight. For us the Hesperides are unsphered and our unknown seas are those of outer space. The Pillars of Hercules have moved westward till they are become the very gates of the East; and the shoulders of Atlas have broadened to bear the weight of a whole universe.

The broad outward tide of sympathy returns with an uplifting inward tide of experience. To see all is the only way to perceive either our place or our use-

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fulness in it. Many a purpose is enheartened, many a thought made agile by a new appreciation of its pertinency. The whole is no harder than the part, and tires less because it means more. Only full information can pick the fitting; in the mere attempt not to act foolishly we become experts. A true sense of proportion is not given us until imagination cuts loose from the accustomed—from locality, profession, circle, cult, age: wherever the pressure of convention is taken off, the well-spring of individuality gushes up. None but untrammelled eyes may see things disinterestedly and as they really are, instead of relatively to some personal end. Contacts or ties of any kind are fetters upon the mind's freedom: men that conceive life in its large relations feel constrained in any particular or special relationship. All rel-

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activities must be melted in the pot of truth. Partiality is ever a disqualified judge: if it play a prosecuting or punitive part, justice is never free from suspicion; to leave administration in partisan hands is never safe. Men that argue the right side are known by their quiet reliance on reason; but bitterness is a sure badge of misgiving. The truth is calm with its inevitability.

No one can exercise circumspection without being rewarded by the discovery of something to better or to omit; revision proves a very Siegfried of rescue to some slumbering Brunhilde of our unconsciousness. When at length we see our deficiencies, we marvel that others can ever have had faith in us; scarcely can we then understand their long tolerance of our faults. Would we know the truth about ourselves,

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let us simply stand aside and regard our vacant desk, our doffed clothes, our interrupted task, the habitation of our former sojourn. How much smaller looks the lot when the structure is down. Death comes like a day of departure when we go forth and gaze back with strange and disillusioned eyes upon the city in which we have so long dwelt.

Life is offered us in full, but ill-health and narrowness halve the sum we receive. It is a population of fractions. Physical disorders and psychical twilight reduce our day to dimness. The natural trend of existence is toward truth and health—among all the ills Jesus suffered, bodily ailment is never mentioned; it is only our misapplication of its forces that reverses its direction. Not our limitations but our own smallness keeps us petty instead

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of public-spirited, politicians instead of statesmen, sceptics and scoffers instead of seers and enthusiasts. How opulent are those that invite life's full response and receive their whole income of joy. We waste ourselves among the foot-hills and never reach the mountains. Mere technicalities of sense-procedure long cut us out of our rightful inheritance of happiness. By exacting the little compensations we forfeit the large gifts: it is loss of the more that damns the less. The great are simply those that are not moved by small motives. We die like the pines at our lower branches, when like them we live at the top.

Experience is the behaviour of the soul under exposure to the universe: all events are reducible to this one event that gives them meaning, namely: the action of humanity in sense-contact with the material world, in spiritual

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contact with God. Moving along the resultant line of these two influences, man traces the contour of individual life and the profile of history. Whoso spans a generation, views the viaduct of the ages.

## THE CRESCENDO OF MEANING

**I**NSIGHT is the dulcet piper that charms out the children of the heart into a land of loveliness. With magic touch it rifts objectivity and opens vistas of inner meaning that fulfil our early dreams. Facts keep unfolding, curtains are constantly drawn aside and verities that transcend all expectation are unveiled. The enlargement of life is incredible.

Under the lensed eye all things expand and grow beautiful. Reality, when studied, suffers first contraction and then dilation: though analysis forfeits the initial spell, it discovers a deeper. The prism of investigation

## THE CRESCENDO OF MEANING

refracts all white light of fact into its tricolour glory. Every experience keeps its best wine until the last: no hopes but in their own way come true. We live a continual paradise regained. What satiety stole, simplicity restores; what knowledge lost, wisdom recovers. Faith survives every shock and dominates every finale. The raking of our forts only leads to fortification of the impregnable heights; God is still ‘eine feste Burg.’ Our philosophy can always withdraw itself to a position in which it is unassailable. The quaking of earth never drives man away but merely to better construction.

All deep thought strikes the great common subflow of beauty: existence is ‘the king’s daughter all glorious within.’ Wherever perception probes it becomes ecstatic. One cannot speak indisputably without speaking majesti-

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cally. The great æsthetic enthusiasms are not grafted on—they grow from the root of reality. Oratory lends itself only to truth, never to a mere cause. Some new phoenix of imagination scars from every mental conflagration; philosophy finds no final expression of itself save in poetry.

Credence is the widow's curse. Mis-trust and contempt are doubtful ad-ditions to efficiency, and despondency is but a door drearily creaking in the wind; whereas devotion to what we have doubles it. The thoughts we re-flect upon open up into an ever-ex-panding context; every self-interview becomes a fresh intimacy with truth. Perception turns all it touches to gold and raises action to its last potency of possibility. If any side of life seem shallow or stagnant, the fault is in our way of looking at it: the morning

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is inspired, the evening cheerful, only noon has still to struggle against spiritual negation. Nothing is more exhilarating than to have matters of former indifference or distaste become full of interest and delight. There are no tracts of ignorance or obnoxiousness that may not yet yield us our finest fruits of joy. Under a musical presentation threadbare thoughts receive a renewed freshness and words expand to a fulness from which they never recede.

Timely construction cures the archaic text. Christ abrogated few of the functions which he found, but filled them with wider import and ampler life. Even in correcting, insight confirms: it never lessens meanings but always enlarges them. All constitutions and religions liberalize themselves in the reading.

## THE FIRMNESS OF FOUNDATIONS

**H**E that states a reason makes a convert and wins a friend.

All demands are exacting till we see their intent: we become reconciled to most orthodox ways by understanding them. Not in multiplying experiences, but in gaining knowledge concerning them lies progress. Each day adds new explanations and justifications of old facts. Over the entire field of life its rationale is arriving just in time to seize from the failing grasp of formalism the falling standards of faith and to raise them again aloft.

Few moral secessions live. Whatever aspect conditions assume, we chafe un-

## THE FIRMNESS OF FOUNDATIONS

der them: if they compel, it is bondage; if they prevent, it is exile; if they offer a choice, it is a quandary. We would lay the blame outwardly, but are sobered by finding the trouble in ourselves. The *force majeure* of things quickly puts down our upstart rebellions against them and by making us converts to their reasonableness keeps us ever thereafter loyal subjects of their régime. Our contentiousness is as our youth, for the superfluousness of quarrel is soon apparent. Life is a fight that is won by the peace-loving. Seeing that all forces quickly spend themselves, how foolish is fanatical opposition. Most dawns are turbulent, but the wind dies down with the day, and the evening is at peace. By one discipline or another are we all broken at last to life and brought to the same philosophy.

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Foundations are deeper than the reformer imagined and therefore both more unsubvertible and more just. The forces of support as well as of overthrow gather around the long-enduring; if investigation shows the futility of event, it shows also its necessity. The accustomed and familiar always seem easy to dispense with, yet if foregone it is exactly these that are most missed. In whatever direction we try out the wings of our liberty, we are glad of return. Freedom to roam so accentuates self as to weary us of it; men to whom every avenue of choice is open crave some determining necessity. We forfeit the substantial satisfactions by insisting on whims; if we rid ourselves of little limitations, we are likely thereby to incur larger ones. Long misunderstood and misinterpreted acts are approved at last by our be-

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lated wisdom: our elders are gone by the time we reach them. Let us not leave our tribute to be graven on the grave. It is the fate of most experience to be learned too late or applied too late. But insight like all earlier possession reaps the reward of timeliness.

Permanence is often more productive than improvement: the cumulative ivy clings only to the stone of stability. There are many commendable accomplishments that will not compensate for the loss of time in their acquirement. It is not necessary that things should be the best in order to be the best for us: familiar methods, though defective, may well be more advantageous than restrictive ones. Any straining or constraint costs us the effectiveness of ease: our cleverness undoes us with our audience. As soon as independence becomes conspicuous

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it becomes a handicap, for any consciousness of appearances prevents the free movement of the mind. No position is tenable that wastes itself in self-defence. Petty economies squander more time than they save money. It takes a large stake to make litigation profitable. A greater distraction often than any we avoid is the effort of its avoidance and the sense of the hostility thereby incurred. The ruts into which we fall are no accidental route, but the repeated vote of activity and the unanimous resolution of thought. Every change, even a beneficial one, takes our breath away, for it involves some loss upon which we had not counted. Dangerous to separate are the wheat and tares of idiosyncrasy; we may jeopardize our quintessential qualities by uprooting peculiarities. The excision of deep-seated ills is a heroic

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remedy and one likely to prove fatal to welfare.

The universe cautions but does not coerce; it punishes but does not prevent. It has apparently resolved that freedom shall shape itself and restraint be self-imposed. And what such compulsion as reason? Where it fails in imperative it gains in suasion. Most things are as they had to be, and therefore once for all. One and the same throughout all ages are the bases of being; the channels of existence have not greatly shifted since the beginning of time. The old ways because the natural ways survive every innovation to which it was expected they would succumb. Few are the customs or usages that fancy does not some day revive; the old-fashioned always enjoys an Indian-summer of favour. We mistake the froth of change for a new surface

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till we find there is no substance beneath. The radical becomes both disillusioned as to his dream and reassured as to reality. If energy disdains precedent, it sacrifices some of its efficiency; except from the high table-land of experience, individuality should not peak itself. The merits of civilization are not fully apparent until we push primal instincts and needs to extremity. To-day's strength is staggered at the accumulations incidental to the mere ease and leisure of the centuries; and the toil and agony that have gone into their spiritual creations—who but the creative can comprehend? Incalculable is the vested capital of time. Anarchism, like other anachronisms, is but the remonstrance of the waves to the shore; for to the sea-level all elevation is an object of envy.

Sooner or later compromise cuts the

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locks of every Samson. There is always an element of ignorance about what we immoderately hate or love—hate being blinder than love because it overlooks whereas love only looks away. Fuller experience neutralizes both extremes and imbues us with subdued mixed feelings. The precipitate choices of enthusiasm seldom wear well: only what is never wholly in place is never wholly out of place. It is better that friends, as well as articles of general necessity, should be passably suitable to all occasions rather than perfectly but at the same time exclusively so to one. Most hasty purchases, snap judgments, acquaintances *du voyage*, sudden marriages develop later some feature of undesirability. It is usually the bitter fate of brilliant qualifications to find themselves passed over in favour of mediocre but all-round

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capacity; the dark horse is always a moderate.

No new up-building can cut off the ancient lights of faith. Progress, whatever its innovation, respects the easements of the soul: the spiritual view is inviolable. Life smiles upon any front reason presents, and festoons it with garlands of love. Poetry is a perennial: the flowers of fantasy spring up around every fact and embower every form of truth. Whatever dynasty reigns, the pomps, the glory, the dignities go on; though we destroy the structure's fundamental, let us preserve its ornament, for this will still be needed in the new. No religion has neglected to call in to its aid the essential sanctities of nature: the scene, the sky, the season offer an alliance that none dare reject. All Easters or harvest-homes have an autochthony of meaning that antedates

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any theology, making them festivals in their own right. Religious devotion whencesoever originating draws from the same springs: the sanities and beauties of existence respond to and corroborate every sincere faith. There is nothing potent in any form of worship but it becomes the heritage of its successors. Needlessly has liberal Christianity impoverished itself by rejecting all the traditions of the historic churches. The romance and poetry that have grown up within and around the cult of Rome are—to a large extent—pertinent to no particular creed but are the universal possession of Christendom.

Inconsistencies and contradictions soon cease to disconcert us, or even to put us to our election; we calmly posit some inclusive truth that reconciles them. To supplement is always to solve. Truths that seem to clash,

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really only eclipse each other: every stellar verity has its own orbit, and the universe contains all without interference. Principles are often philosophically consistent though conflicting in application, like ships that collide at the harbour mouth though at sea giving each other a wide berth. Of so many selves are we composed that no incongruity of speech or conduct convicts us of insincerity; every new contact calls upon us for the emphasis of some different phase of disposition—causing us without hypocrisy to adapt our manner to the occasion. We are potentially any personality that we vividly picture; and incipiently feel the sentiment that seems suitable.

Truth quarrels with itself only because subdivided: contention is generally but the confrontation of its parts. The solution of most altercations is not

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ouster but cotenancy: by addition not by subtraction we amplify truth and make it total. There is no reason why argument should lead to a wrangle of words, but at most to a new angle of vision; antagonism issues usually in some newly-qualified assertion. No contradiction can be permanent—or if permanent real. We cripple conclusion whenever for the sake of clearness we reject data: always to stay where we can see bottom keeps us in shallow waters. The inclusive view cannot be composed otherwise than of detached glimpses from manifold points: what philosophy gains in consistency it is wont to suffer in comprehensiveness. How long must not thought be ploughed and harrowed by experience before ready for grading and seeding and setting out into the fair, smooth lawn of system.

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The world seems incoherent; yet all its phenomena spring from one and the same underlying cause and conduce to one and the same general effect. The marvel of the universe as of the metropolis is multitude moving to individual ends without confusion. Think of the infinite division and minutiae of existence as it is to-day, and of the inconceivable mass and variety of it that have already sunk into the abyss of the past—and yet that myriad ramification is all contained in the mind whose development it is. Nature is but the manifold material differentiation and the spiritual reunification of the one substance: characteristic of all great creation is it that identity of origin insures unity in result.

## PERSONALITY

ACTION is not self-analytic. The fruit lies in the sap and juices and has to come out. It is only when a man flowers that the world botanizes him. We cannot help our fundamental traits nor their efflorescence; ability has but to live to be. How foolish our solicitude for self-effectuation: nothing else is possible. One cannot move without showing his mettle. Discouragement merely evinces ignorance of the world's *modus operandi*; impatience is the inexperience of expectation.

Capacity guarantees itself: what we can do, we must do, for qualification is urgent and captained by unquench-

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able wish. We are furthermore pledged to our idiosyncratic methods and purposes; nothing can stir our fancy and evoke our utterance save in the guise that pleases us. Unless satisfied to be what we are we take leave of happiness from the outset. Involved in one's point of view are both his individuality and his style: under the persistent lapping of one's waves the shores of circumstance cannot but conform to his contour. The opportuneness of the great is not, on its subjective side, the accident it sometimes seems to be. If we remembered the inevitableness of genius we should cease to be surprised at the sustained loftiness of its effort or the sure recurrence of its inspiration.

Though the topic of experience is fortuitous, the treatment of it is our own. Life is a stray, random walk that brings us out we know not in advance where,

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nor does it much matter. Qualifications attract to themselves the conditions for their exercise; men gravitate toward the persons and situations that suit or need them not so much by intention as by the indirect working of unconscious predilections. Facing a design which somewhere, somehow, has been placed before his eyes, man works it into the details of his life, thereby fashioning fate to himself. There is among purposes little precedence of importance except such as a superficial relativity may give them. As long as energy revolves smoothly in some orbit of activity round ourselves, small difference which or at what radius. A change of occupation is but a new play in which the same actors of character perform new parts. Though the way-side changes, the destination remains unaltered. We develop along the grain

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of temperament, and according to its cleavage so is our career. Our particular task, to be sure, is cut out for us by events, yet it does not in spiritual reaction greatly differ from any other that could have been assigned us; though placed through fate's agency, we were already qualified for all similar positions. A Cromer would have found his Egypt anywhere, just as every Egypt finally finds its Cromer. Ismails of misfeasance always and everywhere give competence its opportunity.

Fortune is the accident that befalls the fit. There is no perversity of event; the buttered-side-down of ill-luck happens because it is the buttered side. Everything hits the sore spot, but no more than any other; every circumstance fans our facility, but favours other qualities no less. One finds what

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he is looking for; all things rush to the service of him that knows how to use them. We wait only the shaping concept of form to mould life as we wish. The accident of poetry overtakes none but the poet, in whose case it is sure to happen. Successes are at least collaterally incident to our attempts; we meet casually some day the mood for which we long have waited. Let us but carry the botany-box of observation and we shall gather many specimens. Into the magazine of the eager mind the spark of incident will inevitably drop. Chance is a pollen blown haphazard through the air and much wasted, whose illimitableness nevertheless insures the fructification of every receptivity.

All ships are alike steady in the smooth harbour of convention, but the high sea of experience sizes up their seaworthiness: occasion develops hidden

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differences among men that are seemingly the same. Character is, as it were, a fuel-wood that often retains its form though burned to ashes, yet will disintegrate at a touch. Out of the same kitchen of circumstance we serve up according to our culinary knowledge such different dishes. The genius creates a cosmos with the dull matter at hand. There is nothing so ugly but it may be made the abode of beauty: to encounter each moment in a spirit of transfiguring it inspires to noble words and acts. We become successful when once we have discovered the individual way of taking life that puts it to the high purposes of which we had always seen it capable. The efficient are merely such as follow a sweeter and saner spiritual hygiene.

It is the simple, homespun qualities of character that are the final arbiters

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of our career. The drift of intelligence is determined by our moral make-up; we can follow happily or successfully no calling whose demands are not subservient to our own necessities. Our waters must sink to their natural level before there can be calm. Like those reptiles that swallow nothing until they have first covered it with the saliva of receptivity, so is the mind. Experience impresses us practically or poetically or philosophically according to the kind of suggestion or inference it rouses within us. If we see things in such a large relationship that they are illuminating or in such a harmonious one that they are beautiful, our career tends to the artistic; if in such a human way that they are cogent, we develop as moralists; if in such close connection that they are immediately useful, our activity takes a practical turn. Before

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we can deal with a subject it must be made translucent to the rays of truth that are peculiar to our vision. The pace for energy, whether physical or spiritual, is always set by the motions of the soul. What surprises us most often in great men is not so much their intellectual acuteness as some moral trait that made it available. It is not our abilities but our command of them that constitutes character.

Mere prevalence because pointing to suitability or to inner compulsion furnishes a clue to propensity: everything by becoming wide-spread becomes considerable. The majority view is always more important as a fact than as an opinion, just as things may collectively constitute conspiracy that singly are innocent. The temper of a people already evinces itself in the tempo of its national dance: we cross the bound-

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ary whenever we encounter the type. All lands are epitomized on the steamer thither. In these standardized days local peculiarities have come to seem artificial and as if adopted for effect; and not until we see their naturalness are we convinced of their innateness.

Men hold us to a greater accountability for the direction our good qualities take than for being devoid of them altogether. Over our abilities they imagine us to be possessed of some power of guidance that they do not ascribe to us generally. Little do they realize that we have often no option in the matter, and that, though perhaps with equal regret, we must go whithersoever these lead if we follow them at all. We are committed to our excellences as much as to our infirmities and cannot dictate their tenour even if we would.

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Spontaneity needs no voucher. Our essential traits ramify into our smallest acts and make them characteristic. All men are known in the breaking of bread. It is only when our little ways conform to our large words that we are assured of our sincerity; the peccadillo suffices to disclose the flaw. Devices of relief or alleviation are an index of the disposition that finds them restorative. As merits are a warning of antithetical faults, so from the nature of our deficiencies can we often infer the field of our efficiency. Well may one be submissive to the disadvantages incident to his peculiarities, knowing them to be the small penalty he pays for his best gifts. Eccentricities are the normal acts of an unusual spirit, by means of which it preserves itself in subjective normalness and sanity. Every experience corresponds to

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the specialty of temperament that undergoes it; so that needs, demands, trials, sicknesses vary with each one of us and call for some specific of alleviation or cure. Even our end is characteristic of us, for it is in the last analysis induced by our characteristics: we die true to our *métier*.

Of our capacities come our incapacities, for traits oblige us to be not only nobly true to them in important affairs, but also ridiculously so in trifles; we cannot escape their jurisdiction. Our merits raise hopes that our faults dash. Implicated in our genius are our mannerisms and our meannesses: all are of one piece and importunacy. The qualities that make us ashamed of our friends are the same qualities that, suitably exercised, make us proud of them. Not wholly within our control is the extent to which we shall avail ourselves

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of our idiosyncrasies, nor can we stop them short where we will. Is not everybody put to it in one direction or another to efface some eccentricity that makes him over-conspicuous, seeking thereby to discredit what he cannot contradict? Much that is set down to affectation or pose or professionalism is not in reality that, but simply the consistent and unconscious outcropping of character. Unwittingly and perforce we live self out; what is real is unavoidable.

Men pursue their road to the end—for the same reasons and out of the same necessities that have brought them thus far along it. What fashions us, determines and directs us. Though the burnt child dreads the fire, it is sure in some way to hurt itself again. The persistence of causes and the blazed trail of repetition always render recur-

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rence likely. Instead of sobering us, ill consequences often drive us further, as a runaway horse is frightened by his freedom and runs amuck. Men are reckless with borrowed money or they would never have borrowed it; friends that squander their capital put our own at risk. Not for lack of warning is it that fatalities befall us, but rather because of such repeated warning that we have grown callous: we believe no sign but the event. Even a close escape leaves us audacious. Victims at last are we of the very sagacity that preserved us longest: new situations arise to which the lessons of our experience are no longer applicable, and the exercise of an outdated wisdom undoes us. Acquisition seldom proves tenacious when it falls upon changed days, for it is unable to perceive or adopt the needed precautions. All old Spains of capac-

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ity must submit to seeing their golden Americas drop one by one from their failing grasp.

## THE FORETELLABLE FUTURE

**A**NALYSIS is the true haruspex, and the constitution of the universe the Cumæan Books of the Sibyl. The future is not given over to the threateningly possible but to the necessarily continuous. In the inherent and immanent lies the philosophy of the ultimate: an acumen that could consistently unfold the existing, could construct the coming. Insight is foresight; study, the safest prophet. A little thought puts us in possession of great powers. Though experts are sometimes wrong, laymen are only sometimes right. In periods of anxiety the unthinking rush to the bulletin of news and, to ascertain the outcome

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of events, besiege the head-quarters of their mere chronicle. But there they encounter only uncertainty and hesitancy, the consulting of precedent, the waiting upon further tidings. Experience on the other hand sits quietly apart and by deduction from the known anticipates the unknown, from the intrinsic reasons of things determines their extrinsic development.

Most reversals of tendency are more apparent than real; conditions are wont to go on unalterably along the old lines. What comes suddenly is seldom organic and therefore seldom remains. Exactly as to-day is the fulfilment of yesterday, so will the future be the out-growth of to-day. Its components are in many instances already extant and, as it were, awaiting us. Existence does not break off but simply expands. No to-morrow of hope is a miraculous birth,

## THE FORETELLABLE FUTURE

but merely a new generation. The credulity that lends itself to panaceas, formulæ for world-rearrangement, get-rich-quick schemes, predictions of approaching apocalypse and the like is due to the small attention given to fixed order and natural laws. How can we be cognizant of probabilities unless familiar with the meteorology of possibility? The forces now in operation may be calculated upon as continuing, with only such changes in direction or intensity as their clash or union with one another will effect. Would that their conjunctions could be foretold by man's astronomy with the same accuracy as are those of the stars.

Though we scan the sky of eventuality, we fail to look to the windward of events. The drift of fact is deceptive: most storms move in opposition to the prevailing day. It is still fair overhead

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though the squall is about to break; still leaden when about to clear. Predictions rarely prove profitable unless they sell the blue skies and buy the black. Good reasons are incipient facts, and the ideal the only sure future. The fan of fate winnows subtly; time effects a reclassification of values incredible to any superficial expectancy. Where forecasts of the future generally err is in failing to allow for some as yet unborn factor—itself the product of present forces—that is to play a controlling part in it. As to-day is surprising, so will to-morrow be unexpected. The symptoms that frighten the patient are not those that alarm the physician, but those he has overlooked.

## UNIVERSALITIES

PERMANENCE and transience are but varying degrees of tentativeness. The age is an overgrown orchard, half in decay and half vital: covered here with vine, there sending out shoots. On every side the erewhile uniformity disappears and gives place to the irregularities of a changing skyline. With what travail and destructiveness does the new emerge from the old. Only the ground-plan of life remains the same.

Upon the sea of existence there is never calm, save where by chance amidst its smoother waters some glassy lagoon is for the moment exempted by the air. All apparent peace is speedily

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shattered by the breath of disturbance or ploughed by the storm-share of experience. No sooner do conditions appear fixed than a fresh burst of unsettlement overwhelms them. Every Sunday of repose is followed by a Monday of upheaval.

There is no structure that the sheriff of time does not one day enter and put up to the competitive bidding of destruction. The tragic touches the commonplace and makes it gasp. To the wailing of the wind all objects lend their note of sympathy: the bow of pain is drawn by the merest breeze across the viol of the pine. Into our little lot comes fate, enacting its great drama upon the very boards of routine. Who is there but tastes some of the bliss, some of the agony of existence; from its beauty when is its hideousness long absent? Life is to each a com-

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posite of loveliness that gives itself and of dreadfulness against which he must guard. Destiny has in store for everything, however secure-seeming, a day of wrath, a day of mourning, when we shall be convulsed with the terror of its loss. The pick and flame of event removes all to make room for the coming.

Eating at the heart of all things is the canker-worm of change; what then can be permanent save change itself and Him that allotted to it its task? Yet despite the universality of movement mankind lives on unmoved. Laughter hears not the groans of the dying, nor does health behold the misery of the sick. Over the bones of the past, life spreads the surface of its gaiety, and suns itself beneath the palms of warm security in plain view of fate's Alpine snows.

No astronomy cures us of regarding

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ourselves as fixed and central in the firmament of being. Man dwells on a crust of earth interposed between eruptive inner fires and the deadly outer cold of emptiness; established upon a little spot surrounded by engulfing seas and bounded north and south by the fatal poles; clinging to a whirling earth that rushes around an unfixed sun; himself the occupant of a time-set body—and prates forsooth of safety and rest. In the space of our brief outing the bird is hatched and fledged; the tick of our watch measures the span of the midget's life—yet we say: ‘There's plenty of time.’

Strewn about us lies the scaffold of creation. Animate nature confronts us in every conceivable form and activity—flying, crawling, walking; timid or friendly or ferocious; sullen or vocal. Few rungs of the ladder of life are miss-

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ing. And everywhere creation is still incomplete and in process; nature is still bringing forth the offspring of the first cause. Mankind has yet to body forth the angelic face and the divine heart. The years are making new beings of us; the ages of men are the generations of God. We creatures are the route, each of a particular line of development, which by means of our consciousness is ever being drawn on to its culmination. In far perspective may be seen the horizon-line where minds meet and souls merge in the full consciousness of humanity.

Daily the world unrolls its wonders anew, and yearly tells over the beads of its phases. Life is in universal communication on every side: whichever way we turn are the infinities. The water that I watch in the brook is ocean-bound, soon to wash salt shores;

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fresh off Mars comes the air that fans me. The very earth at my feet is a scion of the sun, and the light of common day is the breaking surf of æons and immensity. In an unbroken chain of causation the universe stretches back to its beginning, and is in full mobilization toward its far-off end. What is existence as we gaze out upon it but a moment's stage of an infinite progress —its pillars of permanence but our instantaneous impression of a steady march in all its ranks from the dawn of time to the last day? The world is drawn from under our feet as we stand, and we must tread merely to keep our relative position in it.

We look up through an unmurmuring sea of space past the steady, flashless light-houses of its headlands, and see that except for the spinning of the spheres there is nothing to indicate or

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even constitute Time but that all is one long continuity of light. The causative sequence threading the present with all that is past or still to come, is in truth the co-temporaneousness of eternity. In the flux of event existence seems fleeting; but among the tracts of timelessness it has no transience at all. Coexistence is the only real chronology. Consciousness because caught up with and accompanying change is incapable of perceiving continuance, yet is itself the immanence of the changeless.

## THE VOICE VICTORIOUS

SELF-CONFIDENCE inoculates with its greatness and makes us rise to its stature. We live up or down to our conception of ourselves: the inner picture projects itself into conduct. A good opinion of one's self is necessary to the deserving of it; handsome-is may look at the mirror, but handsome-does cannot afford to. We thrive only when we entertain such idea of our importance as makes us prolific; all minds have need of some fertilizer of conceit. Those who believe in us energize us because they inculcate a similar belief. In order to offset the world's indifference we must keep our good qualities in constant realization;

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it is never safe to undervalue ourselves any more than it is to permit our undervaluation by others. We are infected by false appearances whether good or bad and come to merit our reputations. To cut a sorry figure endangers self-respect: even our attire attunes us to the pitch on which we would play our souls. It is not ignoble to study effect to the extent that it serves as an example or reacts on self. The pace, the rhythm, sets the mood: unconsciously we become the part we assume. Pose is not without sincerity; and in the end we make it true. There is an affectation that is aspiration. Let us be actors who identify ourselves with a great rôle. Ambition is a frame that fact soon fills.

All great constructions rise within a scaffold of faith. The leaders of men are able to conjure up about them a

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belief in possibilities far beyond the truth. In their spiritual atmosphere other men are lifted up into a mirage of themselves, and earth swims in a sky of fancy. The superiority of a cause transmutes all personal inferiority, and one feels and acts the aristocrat he is. Let us await no adventitious mantle of authority but assume at once the prestige from within.

Unless we preserve our attitude we are torn away and overwhelmed by the flood. As long as we look to another for our cue we do not possess ourselves. The only avenue to self-confidence is self-reliance: when our standard disappears life gropes. No one can observe, much less profit, by fluctuations who is not himself fixed. If we abdicate our point of view there is no longer any royalty in our acts. To take counsel is to grade down the level

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of our good ideas; more mistakes come from misunderstanding directions than from receiving none. Until we have our own rating we accept any that others press upon us. Youth is a frame house that has no equableness of inner temperature but varies with the heat and cold of the circumstantial weather; whereas the thick walls of experience preserve in one's temperament an equanimity through every change. The years gather a constancy of impetus that is but little affected by the loss of a night's rest or by the latest mishap. So confirmed does one's course of life become that even the most affecting events lose their power to deflect it.

Beginning is the chill plunge into delicious waters. There is no safe casement but courage: the timid, like old fortified towns, are confined within their walls of defence, but energy is a

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large city that overleaps all protective lines and relies wholly on the offensive for safety. Life led on the defensive cowers and eventually capitulates: only aggression can win the war. Let us call in the flagman of fear and go ahead. Initiative protects and is self-protected. There is no continuity in clinging to things as they are, but only by changing them to our self-expansion. Advance alone keeps the old proportions. All rights are conditional, all conditions relative, all relations variable—so that continuity itself is change. The departures we make so fearfully and reluctantly prove to anticipate by little the inevitable evictions of time: we only forestall fate when we effect the most radical of moves.

Men are masters of what they take, not of what they hold. Values are learned in their acquisition and lost in

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their retention. With those that labour in self-support circumstances are in alliance, but in conspiracy against those who live on their income: one cannot feel sure of his money unless he makes it. If we practise mere prudence, we are restricted to the small adaptations of living instead of passing on into the wider relations to which large activities introduce us. A studied economy is at the expense of productiveness and creativeness, but earnings come through the expenditure of these. The local, technical, detail information necessary to the avoidance of life's minor ills, costs the contemplation and society of its major goods. We often lose more than we gain by our scheming: shrewdness is a defensive policy that lays one under a heavy contribution of unloveliness. Only the affirmative qualities shepherd life. The margins of ex-

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istence are nowhere so certain that we can rely on them; between us and disaster there are only slender reserves—of harvest, of fortune, of morality. A short crop kills a generation; some error of judgment and we are penniless, some flaw of standard or slip of conduct and we are behind the bars. To overcome is safer than any escape, to advance than any retreat. Attack is the sure asylum. We out-distance every danger we surmount and quickest climb to safety: the hills are free from the perils of the plain. Upon the barometer of the soul's altitude may be read the degree of its impregnability. Shade is not necessarily shelter; nor does retirement necessarily shield. More and more do experience and civilization make men look to their own development rather than to any intrenchment of protection or prestige. Time turns

all its erewhile fortifications into parks and playgrounds for the people; aristocratic palaces of privilege are everywhere occupied by a swarming promiscuity. The world is illuminated nowadays without the lights showing.

Independence is a self-conferred order of nobility, and at once classifies us anew. The instinct of what we are and the strength bred of its assertion radiate from us an indisputable noblesse. It is the insignia of our due that it is assumed unconsciously and accorded unquestioningly. To be actuated by intrinsic motives always commands deference; natural courtesy wins social supremacy. Only at the centre is repose: the peripherally-minded are kept constantly rushing and are ever tempted tangentially into space; but the pivotal are at peace. Easy manners show mental ease. The curse of

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the conventional is stiffness; only originality acts gracefully. They are the delightful companions who plant themselves on fundamental reasons and treat all incident as illustrative thereof. Everywhere copyists are at a discount. Men think to win consideration by conformity, but that is the most likely way to forfeit it: the envied and sought-after are those that are sufficient unto themselves. There is no such superiority as indifference. We care little for comment when we have once won some great approval that makes us sure of ourselves. To be quietly but confidently self-insistent is the most effective method of combating supercilious ignorance. As soon as any one takes a decided stand we grant him a rehearing. Steadfastness is a fixed buoy around which all floating craft moor.

Confidence facilely meets the diffi-

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cult day. The intrepid sail a westerly voyage and keep gaining time; but the timid sail an easterly voyage and keep losing it. Diffidence checkmates every move: only assurance wins the game. Our environment, if we fear to face it, contracts—and our career dwindle. We cannot trust our judgment unless we are willing to do the disagreeable and difficult thing. To those that can cope with the danger, courage is natural, but caution to those that cannot. We lose the benefit of our decisions unless we act decisively. Without sturdy faith in them all our superiority of insight or knowledge is wasted, for false appearances frighten us out of our advantage. No venture can be vindicated save by backing it up. The profits are won by a steady adherence to our commitments, not by a frequent drawing out to try elsewhere. Every enterprise

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requires us to turn into it again the earnings that accrue. Determination buries its very gunwale before it will luff.

We live in such a world as we think it: the optimist is fortunate in his choice since he calls his beautiful one into being. The flag of life floats in the breeze of its own joy. Philosophy is creator, for the mind propagates its kind: a man's circle is the progeny of his soul. We move on the level of our eyes, not of our feet. Existence is happy or unhappy according as it pays attention to the things that go well or the things that go ill; though the dwelling upon wrong be only for purposes of correction, it nevertheless deprives us of the enjoyment of the right. The sublimation of good by idealization keeps even step with the sublimation of evil by caricature. Such is the co-

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incidence of glaring error with conspicuous merit that the field of partisanship is always free: the comment on all things is antiphonal. It is chiefly misgiving about ourselves that makes us critical of others, just as most positiveness is a mere whistling to keep up the courage of some doubt. When we are sure of our position we are lenient: men are intolerant simply in self-defence. Our own character is the *advocatus diaboli* that keeps down the roll of saints.

Confidence is by nature triumphant and has won already. Dejection looks at the ground and denies the heavens; but courage sweeps the sky. Of a piece with God's mercy is the heart's undismay at its sin; and its resiliency after every fall is an earnest of God's forgiveness. In the provençal of the soul the cansouns of Mai are ever strum-

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ming and the flower-presses ever scent the air. Each morning the gallant heart rallies itself and shouts hurrah for the hero in us to-day—this time we will over the wall and into the enemy's very stronghold. The event telescopes its terrors. Every circumstance contributes to a purpose once asserted; with the uplift of cheerfulness we open easily every sagging door of difficulty. To its swift-moving traffic the world instinctively makes way; mankind accommodates itself to the courageous. Weak men band themselves together for mutual assistance, whereas the strong impress their fellows into willing service.

The faithless blow is ineffective; but sureness shatters. Fearful age reaps its fears; cats and small boys go unscathed because they do not know the danger. In vain is the unconvinced word. There is no compelling prose-

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lytism but that of one who ‘testifies whereof he does know.’ Certainty goes straight to the precise phrase, but dubiety doubles its words and mixes its metaphors. Only what we feel fully we say vividly: conviction prints.

The world’s wisdom must not unduly overawe: all precedent may fail in its applicability to us. From our obligation to the special self entrusted to us, no criticism, no approval can absolve. The duty of self-fulfilment takes precedence over any of self-correction: we are under bond only to what we have. No opportunity will be lacking if we do not let the opportune pass. The great reproach hereafter will not be because of any deficiency, but because of failure to assert some efficiency. Omissions have large staring eyes from which we cannot look away. We score by practising our

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strong points rather than by tending our weak points. One criticises, another appreciates—if we listen to the first, we give attention to our faults, lose our initiative, dry up and blow away; if, however, to the second, we develop our powers, grow beyond our failings and expand into our full creativeness.

There is as much cause for confidence as for diffidence when life sends us some never-travelled way. To arouse disapproval or derision is a hopeful sign. Only averages and compromises are received with unanimity; the unfamiliar truth or exceptional personality is always a subject of disagreement. On every important question there is a yes for every no, and we are driven back upon our own judgment; the world takes sides for and against us and we have to rally ourselves in self-

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support. It is under any circumstances marvellous that we should pay so much attention to others' opinion of us, seeing that we know it to be founded on so much less accurate data than our own.

Though we find not our ore at this depth or at that, let us never doubt that the place is mineralized. In the to-morrow of eternity why not the same penny of reward, even though the eleventh hour is passed and the noon of finality has struck? Upon the high sea of hope there is no derelict that salvage may not yet tow to port. Experience inspires such confidence in the methods of creation that it inculcates confidence in the results. What Mohave of uselessness shall not be reclaimed, what desert-sands of barrenness shall not become a very Redlands of fertility. Without any special qualification on their part, but merely

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by operation of the influences over-spreading them, the miracle of the disciples was worked. Our acquaintance with the universe makes us content to lie quiet in its hands. The landscape lives on the charity of the sky, yet prospers: it is at the mercy of the sun and rain for sustenance, yet it seldom lacks.

## EVERY END A NEW BEGINNING

THOUGH every transition of soul brings an autumn of fading, it is always spring in some other seasonableness of the heart. Continuous decadence is coincident with continuous renaissance; side by side upon the perennial stem of life are its ripening and its falling fruits. There is a fatality each moment among the flowers and every few days a Fall succeeds their Spring; yet does not the rose-bush of bloom become bare. Interest is never in abeyance, but upon any demise of purpose vests instantly in some survivor. The sadness of cessation quickly passes over into the cheer of a new enlivenment. Everywhere joy presses

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close upon sorrow; the king is dead, long live the king. With the gong of dismay change announces the end, but heralds the beginning with the bugle-call of exhilaration. Extremes have an easy transition: even in calamity the thought of the next step steadies us. Hope is the sickle-moon seen at sundown. The consumptive's courage burns ever brighter as the flame of life flickers and goes out. Despair is the final act by which hope keeps itself alive.

The sacred fire is never extinguished. Though we grow old and gray, the gayety of youth goes on. It is always the high season somewhere; always upon some coast of existence the tide is at full. Fashion flits from the spa only to reappear in the metropolis; life, instead of ceasing, assumes new forms. Purpose does not meet defeat

## EVERY END A NEW BEGINNING

when death trips us, but the ball is rushed on to others who kick the goal. At the feet of the present the future still frisks about in frocks. Leadership ever passes on to stronger hands; nation succeeds nation in world supremacy. The flourishing periods of civilization are not overwhelmed in the ensuing chaos, but, though lying long hidden in monasteries and libraries, come to light again in new lands and under changed conditions. There are few phases of our personal experience, few factors in the world's affairs for which life has not an understudy ready. No star sinks but another rises. And though the earth should slip into the sea, it would be but to raise up a new continent elsewhere.

Truth is a tenant that survives the destruction of its every habitation: concepts do not cease with the objects

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that once embodied and, as we thought, conditioned them. No inundation of barbarism, no French Revolution of effacement, has ever left the spirit extinct or prevented its rekindling on the morrow. Through every flood of submersion, some small ark of survival has conserved a saving remnant of continuity sufficient to re-people life. Faith driven from its earlier abodes takes refuge in a larger outlook. However much creeds may crumble, sacredness is not left without attribution. Shrines rise at large and grant sanctuary to our evicted reverence; worship finds new temples opened to it. Most reformations of error, most extensions of truth are the asylum sought by an exiled spirit: the vaster regions of verity have generally been colonized by those for whom there was no longer room in the old home of faith.

## EVERY END A NEW BEGINNING

Our tree stands—our leafage strews the ground. Every year shows the continuity of youth and the Attica of time. The early flowers that we remember are perennials. Age is an attitude; though life whiten our visage with an edge of foam, so long as we look to the future we are still young. It is not the step but the stoop that betrays our failing strength. When the wealth of the forest falls, a transposed glory gleams upward from the earth; when the luxuriance of existence is over, the beauty of the bare branches comes into view. Not till the senses dwindle does the true distinction of the spirit appear; the thinning of the woods gives the vista. Our physical diminuendo is more than made up by our spiritual crescendo. If life lessens in alacrity, it increases in fulness; in default of the mind's sunlight, the

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moonlight of memory shines. What though the thoughts fall from the feeble fingers of the brain, the will itself is not enfeebled. Health may still be hale, even if confined to the heart: there is no decrepitude while the sympathy is agile. All examples of heroic infirmity unite in showing upon how little perception or participation activity may yet thrive. Energy breathes through the sense that is keenest and sums itself in one if only that be left; we grow sensitive on the side that danger threatens or advantage comes. Spiritual dominion has ever gone forth from a restricted territorial domain. The soul is still in the ascendant as the body sets. Death is a profounder stopping to think.

Life reaches its fruitfulness when its foliage is touched; the sharp frost of experience ripens. Difficulties burnish

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more and more the gold of worth; the later the night the brighter the stars. It is when we notice the crudeness and garishness of the young that we realize how time has matured and tempered us. Efflorescence bespeaks only a temporary mood, but the tree of character is the permanent expression of the heart. With the increase of our own competence the conduct of affairs appears to devolve upon incompetent shoulders. To-day seems less, because of larger eyes: the landscape looks more and more spring-like as the season of the sight advances. Like a far-bound train the younger generation passes by, its windows filled with eager faces; the elder gazes for a moment and then turns back to the contentment of its quiet roadside. When noon is past we welcome the shade as eagerly as in the morning we sought the

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sun, and nightfall brings the sweetest hour of all. The winds of unrest drop with the day. Let us cease also as the day does, and gradually and beautifully grow dark.

## THE AMAZINGNESS OF REALITY

LIFE in the living little resembles any statement of it we ever heard; all names and descriptions stop us short of the truth. Experiences are either encountered under some prejudice or yield some disappointment; the reality proves different from our preconceptions. Everything is more than anything that can be said of it: to live within whatsoever characterization of ourselves is restrictive. We do not by parading our social or official position, however exalted, magnify ourselves, but instead unwittingly disclose a collar of subservience. Mediacy kills the living verities. Most works of art,

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most great occasions come to us hidden under so many prefaces and expositions that we miss their real significance. The music as it bubbled up in the master's soul, so let it speak to me. It is for us to rebaptize all creations of the muse, all emergencies of the soul with names of more intrinsic meaning.

We play life with counters instead of with its coin. Terms and phrases are symbols that no longer call up a picture of the objects or situations or impressions for which they stand. The finance of experience has become such an affair of verbal debits and credits that we are surprised to find bankruptcy meaning an empty pocket-book; nor are we prepared for the multiplicity of opportunity and power that lies coiled within the fact of wealth.

Nothing long continues true to its nomenclature: reality rises and recedes,

## THE AMAZINGNESS OF REALITY

and former readings of it merely mark a one-time level. When put to the test few things respond as expected: every piercing of the surface surprises us either by a hollowness of pretence or by a spurting-out of substance. Never do nations go to war but some startling corruption or unreadiness, some unsuspected capacity or valour, is brought to light. All reputations that belie, eventually betray themselves. To successors failing to live up to it, the firm name ceases to be an asset of good-will; corporations often find their very continuity a handicap. Truth is a health that soon shows through the skin.

Fundamental causes are slowest to give superficial indications of themselves. Save for some occasionally perceptible loss of power we do not notice where a false philosophy or a theologi-

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cal error hurts. How bravely men keep up appearances; even in the case of our friends, we should never suspect that all is not well with them were it not for their inadvertent acceptance of some assistance from us or for some surprising venture on their part. One forgets that beneath every fair exterior of existence are poor failing human organs and the same tiresome, galling detail. It is the fight rather than the plight that raises the flag of distress and catches sympathy's attention. Character reaches surface beautification last —only affectation begins with it. The flourishing periods of civilization have not long survived their structural stage of energy; superficial refinements coincide with decline. Among both individuals and peoples a disregard of external æsthetics serves usually as a badge of basic sincerity. All that

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is settled on fundamental principles makes circumstances subservient to it: it is incredible how quickly an unheeded voice of reason can over-run and conquer the opinionated world. In new countries or during social revolutions, etiquette like everything else artificial goes by the board, yet a new code of kindness and a natural propriety always spring up in its place. Manners that are considerate can never be rude; nor conduct that is right, discourteous.

As observation tends toward introspection, so transcription turns into idealization: no copies are exact, no replicas extant, no realism possible. The truth never tallies with what is told of it: intimacy is forever recasting knowledge. To read is to breathe the breath of another instead of the fresh air; language itself is a misleading table of contents to the book of

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life—of which even the title-page is ambiguous. More and more are we struck with the difference between impressions of existence gained from chronicle or fiction and those derived from our own experience. Reality cannot be realized unless lived; nor the past any longer be accurately imagined save by those who participated in it. The topography of events is fictitious.

Theory acquires an affected tone, but fact gets its own voice back again: the contact with rough actualities keeps observation vital, conclusions sane, and ourselves keyed true. It is practical experience that teaches the philosophic truth: we do not amend our philosophy till life itself proves it false. Without field-notes art cannot speak a living language, nor exhale again the ozone of reality. The books are in the library, but their contents are outside.

## THE AMAZINGNESS OF REALITY

We develop our knowledge only through its definite application; the mind needs instances as retaining points of its ideas. To every one there come times when the medicine of thought no longer avails and he must have recourse to the surgery of action—times when trifling incidents better serve to stir the pool of healing than all his brooding contemplation. Deprived of outward event one loses all measure and perspective; the subjective mood is the intransitive verb of life and lacks object upon which vivifyingly to go over. Though traversing an infinitude of space, the sunlight yet gives up its warmth and brightness only to terrestrial contact; and what is the sea but monotony save on its coasts? One observes among open-air nations like the English, not only the tonic voice, but the blunt speech; forceful men

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were usually reared on a farm, or revert thither for restoration. To those that are shut up to their thoughts little externals become brimful of zest: after a long confinement with what a rush of delight does not the objective world again fill the starved heart and senses. Nature is a second childhood to us every spring.

The world, though a place of known frontiers, of explored roads and exploited regions, remains nevertheless an experience of surprising resources. Impressions do not lose their freshness nor adventures their zest simply because the knowledge or narration of them has lost its novelty: to live the old story is a new story. Things intellectually tiresome may be emotionally tense, the conventionally matter-of-course may be individually eventful: happiness is not conditioned by the

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cleverness of its conversation. There is yet left us to taste practically many experiences of which the mind has wearied: upon mental crusts the emotions will often banquet.

Little remains to be said of life—much, however, about its new meanings: the objectively dead is still subjectively alive. It is easy for philosophy to reduce troubles to their truthful proportions, but not for the feelings. Though existence is to the crude simply an affair of the senses and quickly worn threadbare, to the cultivated it is a mine of unimaginable richness. The simplest act may give satisfaction to a complex spirituality, or serve as its expression; the smallest event may supply profound thought with a field for exercise. Through all hardships the human touch is able to reconcile us to fate. Women atone for their

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want of reasoning by their unreasoning love. Of many delights a rational basis is not immediately discoverable. To what logical place can any utilitarian metaphysics assign the musical ecstasy of birds, or how explain its effect upon the ear of our sensibility?

Truth battens on the trite. The outworn renews itself every day and in each individual; the old rehabilitates itself and through some newly-presented attractiveness wins continuing admiration. All really important things are universal and commonplace; the joy of existence is derived from its staples. Most phenomena that hold the world agog are new but in name; popular fallacies are usually but taking presentations of time-worn error. Until it has gone through every stage of manifestation and thrashed out all the combinations and permutations of

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expression, no vital idea is satisfied. Time never tires of the truth, but perpetuates it by endless re-enactment. The past repeats itself on the live lips of to-day.

Most appeals to sentiment and romance fall wide of the mark: whatever their medium—whether speaking through music or through painting, on the stage or in the real life of others—one feels in them a remoteness of application to himself. We understand only what we imaginatively compass, and this is limited by experience. Of even the organic world we get no true conception save as we think ourselves into it. Trees are but visual images to any one that cannot place himself within them and sense the branches and the twitter of the leaves and the current sap. Comprehension

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as well as considerateness consists in substituting ourselves; the law is to think how things would seem to us or look to others. It is because of the indifference of those whom they benefit that mal-arrangements persist; men are patient under injustices that do them personally no harm. The active propaganda against to-day's social and economic system is carried on chiefly by the unfortunate, while those for whom that system makes provision contribute but a passive condemnation of it. Larger sympathy would not only cure all ignorance but likewise correct all injustice. Experiences that set windows in the side of actuality give us godlike sight. Herein is the power of drama, speaking to us in the first person, visualizing its descriptions, soliloquizing its psychology and adding to words both feat-

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ure and gesture; we seem endowed by it with the calm all-seeing eyes of destiny.

Appearance is little noticed after its first impression. Environment merely dances attendance: the furniture and pictures of existence stand about dumbly waiting should consciousness want them, receiving from it only an occasional glance. It is impossible to foretell what semblance surroundings may come to wear. Men with whom we associate become mere centres of their sentiments and activities, and into our thought of them the idea caused at first by their physical presence no longer enters: some wraith of personality rises up to replace them. The kindly faces into which we read so much meaning are usually without attractiveness whatsoever to the coldly critical. Beneath every troubled sur-

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face of life we soon see that the stream runs limpid. Even from the ills of existence the joy of combat or endurance is not missing. How simple then the recipe of happiness and how universally found its ingredients. If to any circumstance we add the proper reaction, be it acceptance or resistance, the ambrosia is ours. Life must indeed be happy-at-heart inasmuch as having or lacking, enjoying or enduring, receiving or giving, alike means delight. Since success leads to failure and failure to success, and both advance us, what matter which?

For the inexperienced every moment contains a fresh surprise; so contrary to expectation is truth that the uninitiated find everything alarmingly askew. Causes seem inadequate to their consequences; details incapable of their sum. Upon a general sameness super-

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venes an endless differentiation. The world like art achieves its illusions in unsuspected ways. We cannot from any composite of the traits or acts that give to personality expression, account for its impression. Analysis cheats appearance; effect is always 'value as a going concern,' an item that no static inventory can state. Strikingly at variance with the internal aspect of things is the external. Everybody belies his foreign relations: no visit maintains the impression gained abroad. It is generally some imperceptible factor that is the determining one. Taste turns on trifles; a feature amiss mars all. The decline of the day announces itself in the glint of the sunshine; the autumn is presaged by a mere sparkle in the air.

Experience is a continuous rediscovery of the universe. The other half of life is another hemisphere of

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truth, the unfamiliar is an adventure. Things spring into being when we notice them, and when they have passed our door are past. New knowledge is the more operative—hence the convert's zeal. What we have just become aware of has just happened. It is always the hour that last struck. Unconsciously we compare the state of affairs to-day with that obtaining on our first acquaintance with them, as if thereby some absolute measure of their development and change were arrived at: there seems to have been no reality back of our own recollection of it. Modern times begin with childhood—however much to our fathers' age those seemed the latter days. When another leaves there is simply one less, but when we leave the world ceases.

As our thought of the existent is inexact, so is our attitude toward the past

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erroneous: sentiment rarely lets us remember it as it really was, or as it would now seem to us. Even could we revert to former days, we could not relive them: the associative and imaginative centre of outlook has shifted, and we should search for it in vain among the surroundings and conditions in which it once existed. Not from early scenes or experiences are the early impressions to be regained, but rather from such as now bear to us the same ratio: the last is always the nearest counterpart of the first. The joys and sorrows of memory may both exceed and fall short of their originals, seldom, however, do they correspond.

How difficult it is to keep the critical faculty free from the fluctuations of acumen. Failings and advantages are set down as characteristic of those persons or places among whom by chance

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we first observe them, even though they may be everywhere prevalent. Facts alter with our estimate of them. We do not notice how the few piles of particulars upon which our generalizations rest, are little by little weakening, till faith unsupported comes down with a crash. Among untrained minds the objective and subjective tend to become inextricably mixed, and only artistic or philosophic judgment can distinguish between them. Until we know our own focus we cannot tell distance; the noises of the night are ominous because at an unknown remove. Every approaching figure is the expected, every sound the one for which we wait; if we are looking for birds, the flies seem them. As we are overawed by difficulties so are we prejudiced by what is to our interest: good-fortune in our own case is always due to

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merit, ill-fortune to luck. We hold others responsible for what only by the accident of circumstance is ours. Men gauge their movement by the stream instead of by the bank: envy mistakes every retrogression of its competitors for its own progress. Both fortunately and unfortunately the conditions lifting or lowering us tend so to separate us from our compeers and from former contacts, that we no longer realize the change. One is more ashamed of the evils he still combats than of those to which he has already succumbed. Like steam that is invisible till condensed by the air, so does proficiency first know itself on seeing how it outstrips others; and it is generally some incident recalling a higher plane of thought or conduct that makes us conscious of the lower on which we are living. From time to time days of discrimination light up

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our life and show us in what a fool's paradise we had been dwelling: nothing so crushes us with self-conviction as another's amazement or scorn. According to our code so is our criticism. It is instinctive to think the world of a piece with ourselves: to the refined every one is a gentleman, whereas the vulgar refer to every one as 'that fellow.' In the same way tricksters take the prosperous man for a crook, while the noble heart reads kinship in all eyes. The trustfulness of children toward strangers is voluminous praise of parents.

Every philosophy is an *apologia pro vita*, and usually *pro vita sua*: some self-justification or self-establishment accounts for the peculiar form of it that is ours. At each step we feel as if bound to vindicate our own course as distinguished from all others. Most

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attitudes and therefore most careers have their origin in some early wound of the soul; so that the psychologically keen can elicit one's inner history from any little act or word. It is because spontaneity speaks us truest that popularity or neglect so often turns upon little unpremeditated expressions of ourselves. We hold such theories as best thread our thoughts. The world must be adjusted to the needle of our need and its meaning combed to our fashion. Personal impressions are forever seeking a reliable formula to contain them; consistency weaves a web of its own design. The author really has no choice of subject: write what he may, it is still collateral notation of the one central idea animating him; his every book is of necessity an anthology of himself. Preachment of whatever sort is a formulation of the speaker's own

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experiences. In the last analysis it is our spiritual exigencies that determine the special character of our religion; not possibly can the dreamer and the doer get precisely the same meaning from the same tenets or be similarly affected by the same form of worship. The generalizations made by each mind are the bivouacs that trace its line of march; the philosophy of each mind is the glare of its camp-fires reflected in the sky.

## THE AREA OF LIFE

WHATEVER its income happiness lives up to it, and is seldom more opulent for any good fortune. The percentage of life's net return varies little with the expansion or contraction of its business; we grow but do we thereby grow happier? Expense is the inseparable shadow of receipt; cost quickly overtakes profit. To pay for its increased comfort modern life imposes an increased exertion; the demands upon wealth impoverish it. Ease always has additional problems thrust upon it; facilities only require us to cover a larger field. Through nothing adventitious can joy lengthen its lead. We cannot have privilege without accompanying obligation, nor ten talents

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without the necessity of doubling them. Knowledge of consequences renders us responsible for causes; we are accountable for what we can prevent. There is no self-development that does not make us aware of unsuspected defects and defaults; no new insight but is mixed with some disillusion. Accretions of power introduce to wider ambitions, fresh jealousies, further disappointments and regrets.

The susceptibilities of refinement are capable of an exquisiteness not only of pleasure but also of pain; every newly-formed surface of sensitiveness is exposed to some newly-felt soreness. Perfection encroaches and fills everything short of it with dissatisfaction. Inevitably a sense of his unprofitableness haunts any one of high purpose. It is a mercy to the modest that they are judged by others; to the self-satisfied,

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that they are so. Self-importance quickly fades from the far-seeing eye: discouraging days are the invariable precursors of victory. Back of the finished touch of the masterpiece lay what sense of incompleteness, what compromise of unfulfillable conception.

In vain we add if anything be still wanting; consciousness is ever concerned with omissions: the one thing withheld annoys us more than any ninety-and-nine bestowals please. Solitude is a fringe formed by the threads that are lacking: the drawn-work of existence occupies us. All things of which we are sure—be they advantages, abilities, merits, friends—are left alone in the wilderness of neglect, while self goes a-seeking something lost, or only desired. What is matter-of-course is slighted: not for old and tried friends is the entertainment spread,

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but for some mere acquaintance whose favour is still in doubt. Does not some trifling foreground of risk often make us oblivious to the whole background of safety? Success does not necessarily cease to mourn its incidental mistakes; it is always the most conscientious who think they have committed the unpardonable sin. Worry cannot sleep on the softest bed, and neuralgia is enough to neutralize the heart's desire. If we are homesick, what paradise pleases? A muscle amiss may flag the train of thought, and a racked nerve derail attention. More disconcerting are small points of divergence where there is a general similarity either of idea or language or sympathy, than any total unlikeness would be; the silence of intimates often means censure, when from strangers it would mean merely unconcern. The

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reason we receive our severest wounds from our dearest friends is that they alone have the power to inflict them. ‘It is not an open enemy that hath done me this dishonour, for then I could have borne it. . . . But it was even thou, my companion, my guide and mine own familiar friend.’

We suffer not the evils that befall us, but the implications we infer: we take the hurt, not the harm, to heart. All unvenomed adversity is *damnum absque injuria*; all unintended injury is without offence. As sympathy is the supreme help, so mockery is the climax of heartlessness; intelligence, with its pointed thrust, fells quicker than any brutal buffet of ignorance. The real indignities heaped upon Christ were not in the immediate view, but in the larger vista. Yet the vision that incurs the quintessential keenness of

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suffering is at the same time outlook that derives commensurate comfort: where unseen poignancy assails, unseen delectation assuages. At every turn superiority both invites a penalty and reaps a reward, just as at every turn inferiority though finding something to console finds also something to humiliate. Wider sources of refreshment belong to the wider field of fatigue; the sensitive vibrate to tones both above and below the common scale of perception. Though the price paid by susceptibility is great, it receives also an exceeding joy wherewith to pay it.

## THE INCOGNITO OF THE ETERNAL

THE world contains unideally the elements of the ideal. Nothing is entirely acceptable; life presents itself disproportionately and it is for man to adjust the proportions to suit. Everywhere the ephemeral and trivial protrude through the enduring. Goodness is so distributive that perfection can only be collective; there is no tenable philosophy or abiding dream except an eclecticism of all that does not clash. Mass makes good every discrepancy of part, and in totals is found a meaning at which the units had not hinted. Truth and beauty pervade all things, albeit mixed with much dross; it is by virtue of its grain of wisdom that

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foolishness abides, of its spark of vitality that evil persists. The small kernel of worth is always found within the prickly burr of idiosyncrasies; there ripen for us no sweet fruits that do not have some harsh core or rough surface that are as it were the still unremoved scaffold of their creation. Life is at best a rich milk—we get the cream only by the separator of effort. Experience is a small payment on account of perfection.

We cull good from every encounter and reap the normal out of the erratic, ill-adjusted world. Success is merely the effect total of a thousand defeats. Despite every defection at its critical moments, every recoil from its great task, how smoothly life goes on. Outside the walls of confinement and suffering the world still laughs. We are amazed that nature can be so beau-

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tiful in the face of all our sorrow and our sin. Into the very Pincio of sunshine floats the carbolic of pain. May not the music of the heart be but the sad alto that threads its way through a larger harmony in which it is itself unheard? Even now the ear of ideality catches strains of life's symphony. How miserable the condition of humanity, yet how great is man; considering the ugliness and imbecility of individuals, it is marvellous how orderly and beautiful in many of its relationships the world already is. The orchestra is prophetic of the completely socialized state —what shall not the orchestration of mankind finally produce!

To perceive the symbolism of existence is to see it in its integral connections; metaphor is the natural medium of insight and therefore the language of all large thought. What we make

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resound with its fulness of meaning, abides; we sublimate the moment by discerning its *motif*. Let us keep life constantly at its relevant point: there alone are we central where the mind feels its radius. No situation presents itself that will not if we are keenly alive to it stand and deliver a benefit. Unless we wrestle with the immediate, we do not wrest from it its blessing; all things pass prematurely if without profit.

Did we but give our whole attention to the moment and the me, we should have great news to tell. Diogenes in the sunlight awake, the darky in the sunlight asleep, mark respectively the zenith and the nadir of existence. Truths we have completely felt live forever; an occurrence or a situation to which we have completely yielded ourselves becomes a leaf of classic memory:

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What an unfading experience is travel for the sensitive. As small parks are the city's points of self-consciousness, so do the hours spent in roaming or reflection co-ordinate life. To have realized the moment is to have been on the mount. Every flight from distraction is a Hegira from which the soul dates a new epoch.

How much greater is the occasion's yield than any we ever gather from it. As there is no experience that by being taken aright may not ennable us, so there is no human contact that does not afford opportunity to impress upon others some beauty of word or deed. Life is full of mute instruments of responsiveness, tuneless only for lack of the awakening touch. It is the glory of literature that it lifts from mankind the burden of its inarticulateness and clears the channels of its emotion. In-

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dispensable to the world is every one if he but make of his soul a centre of high thought, of his hands implements of helpful acts. By such conduct may we, even according to socialistic standards, qualify ourselves up to any favours of fortune and feel sure of having rendered full equivalent for any livelihood we receive.

Nothing unworthy survives its de-standardization: we rid ourselves of all we characterize, and by applying to evil the name it deserves set truth straight. Men are detained from perfection only through oversight of the detention; the same observation of faults that, applied to others, makes us good critics, would, if directed selfward, make us creative. Whenever we are so circumstanced as to perceive our defects, we amplify ourselves to avoid them. Dis-establishment withdraws adventitious

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support and puts every structure to its own proof. We move instinctively to the removal of the admittedly objectionable: faults generally lurk behind some non-confrontation. At the call of conscious ignorance comes wisdom: the delimitation of knowledge expands it. Even vagueness, if it formulates itself, vanishes; and confusion clarifies by the mere attempt at statement. Just as any dissimulation will cripple the entire character, so by self-confession our whole value is made available.

Only those that pierce to the meaning of things are moved by them, and in turn can move others by means of them. To seize the idea is to take the very citadel of a subject; to perceive a person's rationale is to possess the secret of influencing him. We cannot, unless we see the intrinsic, note the type, and so be capable of discard-

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ing the unessential. It is always necessary in singling out the salient fact to apply insight, exclusion and finally emphasis. What fills the universe in its detail of elaboration, is in conception but an idea, in utterance but a word. Comprehensive minds are those that can focus perception to a point, for only unity can be grasped; the mental scene is not describable till it contracts to a single impression. The preliminary to all artistic treatment of experience is the condensation of it. Terseness talks: how clear and cool are the scant words that issue from the hard rock of action. We build for endurance with the tight-pressed brick of speech.

Art pushes behind every sight or sound to its secret, behind the sensed to the suggested, behind appearance to the truth; its search is ever for the permanent yet unlocalized, for the fleet-

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ing yet not evanescent. It perceives the otherwise imperceptible: now here, now there, it follows up glimpses of elusive beauty. Not all are susceptible to messages out of the blue; only by those that have the cipher is the flash of the mystic heliograph understood. The world takes note only of the obvious—it is for art to make the ideal seem so.

Time enacts the abiding moments of eternity: the cleavage of the finite shows the grain of the infinite. By virtue of some transcendent participation is it that the past persists: the sacredness of memories bears true testimony to their character. Though there is a definite point of embarkation, the sea is boundless, the voyage endless. Implicated in the passing moment are more than its fortuitous circumstances and mortal actors: among

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them moves ‘a fourth like unto the son of God.’ Some enduring element of ineffable meaning is infused into the transitory, bidding all it touches live. Though whole regions of the bygone are submerged, yet specific instants stand out in single salience; though matters of day-in, day-out repetition are extinct, some unique experience still flashes like a far-off peak in the unceasing light of reality. Not merely mythical nor yet ended is that heroic age in which immortals assumed the flesh of detail and participated in mortal action. Better did bards sing the truth than literalists now record it. The glory of earth is the furnishing of heaven. Epic deeds, winged words, illuminating thoughts, illustrious scenes, illimitable music—these though they happen in time dwell in eternity.

## MORAL POLARITY

**G**RWTH is the natural push of being: all advance comes of the forward movement of the heart. If we but gave ourselves up to our good, men would have little to complain of our evil. We flower when we flourish. As with nations so with individuals, progress is chiefly due to the development of natural advantages. Every obedience to fundamental impulse expands us: on the appearance of our power our frailties take themselves off. Weeding is but negative gardening—conscience but a necessary evil. To diverge from self-development is to cheat both ourselves and the world: continual struggle wastes the profitab-

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bleness of strength. Never mind what is not ours, so much as what is; plenty can do what we cannot, few what we can. Let us leave the little berries of difficulty until we have first gathered the large refreshing fruit of spontaneity.

Nature corrects without even so much as an admission of error; she restores without wrench and destroys without waste. By mere emphasis on the beautiful she obliterates the ugly; by mere urgance of the good she blots out the bad. Reform, if it were equally wise, would spare itself much destructiveness of method. There is no way of keeping down the weeds but by a sturdier growth. To feel the full load of one's faults may give the repentance that regrets but not the penitence that replaces. Better than upbraiding ourselves for wrong is an increased diligence for right.

## MORAL POLARITY

We pull life further than we push it. Though there is a moral prejudice in favour of the onerous, efficiency soon perceives the error. A higher law bids us favour ourselves: the irksome is usually the unsuitable. Occasions for fortitude or endurance are not to be commended merely because the qualities themselves are: effort is a noise that indicates obstruction rather than accomplishment. The brawling brook of difficulty contests each inch, but the brimming river of ease is noiseless.

Out of the indigenous and autochthonous joy of existence, art derives its colour, religion its occasion. Enjoyment is but cosmic courtesy and a very essential to all gratitude. A gay heart reassures philosophy and restores faith. The only real tragedy in life is the failure of its power to please.

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

The sky of serenity sets all the birds of the heart to twittering. You've only to hang me in the sun and I'll sing. Most musical outpourings of mankind come from the mere exhilaration of living: art is without object other than to be and to express itself. The delightful days are prolific: we are exalted when we exult. The age of chivalry was the age of the troubadours; but in the sordid struggle of existence beauty is strangled, the song is silenced. Juiceless are the fruits of labour unless ripened in the sunlight of love; existence that is forced develops a pale growth and lacks the fine flavour of refreshment. How can we confer pleasure unless we receive it? What we do without joy gives none.

We produce our best with the least exertion: our debt to the world is paid in the choice crop of our soul's leisure-

## MORAL POLARITY

orchard. Men urge themselves needlessly; the horse is not for the purpose to which it must be spurred. What requires me to hurry or otherwise unduly strive, is not mine. The rough road of uncongenialness consumes twice the gasoline of effort. We are exhausted quicker by our incompetence than by our competence: unworthy trifles spend us more than the utmost practice of our powers. If men were placed with the same advantage to their abilities, their differing degrees of efficiency would largely disappear. It is not the equal fight that wears us out, but the frequency with which we are forced to call up our reserves against overwhelming odds. The body gives way not under its own weight but under the mind's burden.

Our heavily-laden branches hang low; we must condescend if we would

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

perceive or pluck. We fall to our safety and sink to our heights. It seems to require dire necessity to force our blessings upon us; men turn to salvation only *in extremis*. Relish is always an index because a concomitant of efficiency; when freshness flags, strength has already flagged—fatigue both averts and replenishes exhaustion. How much time we lose trying to cure our lame thoughts instead of fostering our agile ones. The pure ore of our value is reduced at lowest cost; let us devote our energy to development of the high-grade self rather than expend it upon the reduction of our tailings. The point is not to deal with our default so much as fully and expeditiously to bring forth our abundance. The very disqualification here is a certification there: the over-sensitiveness or over-carefulness that is ruinous in one

## MORAL POLARITY

pursuit is the very prerequisite to success in another. It is not incumbent upon us to make gifts save out of our surplus: what is not ours in profusion mankind will get from others better. Enough if we render to God the things that are God's.

Spiritual wealth devolves the greater trusteeship upon us, because the benefit of its distribution is greater. Let us not withhold ourselves: the distant or reserved attitude is a selfish monopoly, but when we behave sincerely and openly toward all, we share whatever privilege we have received. Merely by mixing among men, the cultured, the right-minded raise the general level. The multiplication of beautiful souls is the only propagation that increases life. Those who further the race, father it and become the true patriarchs.

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

Action is happy only when unconstrained: though the compulsion be but that of convention, it is still slavery. To prescribe is usually to proscribe and finally to banish. Care constricts at the stem and withers our foliage; conventionality plucks the rose of nature and binds it into a mere bouquet. Better freedom that deprives us of much, than any advantage that pinches. The heart is no beast of burden but a spirited steed; full of fire when given its head, it becomes in harness but a dejected jade.

Let us live toward the blossom, not toward the root. Self-consciousness is a lesion of the mind: we do not notice our machinery till it is out of order; when the wheels of activity overheat their axle, they must be stopped. The subjective plummet reaches no great depth: observation is cork to the

## MORAL POLARITY

waters of self. Normalness never knows its processes; the best cooks cannot say how they do it. Any surveillance of inspiration cuts off its supply. Even the technique of art, though a cultivation and not an instinct, has no ease till it becomes instinctive.

Power paws the very air with eagerness. Our entire strength can never be enlisted by any insincerity; conscription is ever an uncertain soldier. We indite self only with the stilus of delight: to be spiritually graphic requires the white heat of intensity. All joy blows a clear tone; but disquietude gives a troubled sound. To be listless is to botch. Happiness has strict homestead laws: the soul obtains title to no more than it can duly circumscribe and dwell upon. Lands we do not effectively occupy are not ours.

Life cannot leap except from the

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

spring-board of its facility. God counts on instinct; implied in the planting is the intention to reap. We cannot long drag the anchor-chain of temperament; youth soon gives up the unequal contest; we become content to climb at a lower gear. It is in apparent accordance with cosmic arrangement that the harvesting of innate motives should give the best results. Herewith it is impious for conscientiousness to clash. Things functionally necessary are no field for asceticism; we are not morally safe if any perennial stream of instinct be dammed up. Unless allowed its course, life will not keep its banks. It does not comport with spiritual hygiene to leave any great longing unsatisfied. The pent-up fury of nature stands ever ready to flood the lands below sea-level and convert them into a very Sal-

## MORAL POLARITY

ton Sea of waste. Most abnormalities are caused by the suppression of some legitimate demand, by some blockade of being. In private as in public conduct, general liberty prevents singularity. Where all tendencies find free expression, no one of them can assume undue prominence or go to an extreme; for beyond its proportional part or outside its fitting place, no object, no pursuit is either defensible or attractive: in the presence of totality all that is overgrown or misshapen slinks out of sight. By distributing privilege democracy replaces revolution by ambition and conservatism. Bondage breaks every bound, but freedom brings its own check: though form may be lifeless, life is not formless. Courtesy is but the beaten track of kindness. The very conventions that cramp one person may expand another—accom-

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

modation to custom varies in spiritual meaning with the individual. What is mere etiquette to the boor is occasion to the considerate; what to beneficence is expression, to selfishness is repression. The right finds in the natural form its fullest freedom.

The identification of duty with happiness is the true commencement of our career. Not till then is the fight won, the era of might begun. We fail of accomplishment only because interest does not take hold. Where enthusiasm and occupation meet, there is the compatible marriage of mind to matter in which beautiful thoughts are born and great deeds cradled. To delight in the ordinary and therefore inalienable incidents of existence is the safeguard of moral health; no one is proof against undoing unless these afford him satisfaction. As emotion is

## MORAL POLARITY

stronger than reason, so is love of right more reliable than any compunction. Goodness is a tropic that owes its climate to the greater prevalence of sun. If unshorn of its natural attractiveness and temptations righteousness is irresistible. There is no happier moment nor one more confirmatory of faith than when first we are convinced that duty is not synonymous with denial but with fulfilment; that wrong is not pleasant but that right is; and that thus the seeming irreconcilability of motives is non-existent, our dilemma unreal, our confidence in spiritual unity unstrained.

All consistent activities are unconsciously moral, for morality in the last analysis means better method. Health is a dog that swims instinctively in the waters of duty. Other virtues besides honesty are the best policy: the modern developments of trade verge on

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

and merge into philanthropy: advertisement, largely conceived, turns into real helpfulness. Though commerce is unæsthetic in aim, it cannot in some of its aspects avoid lending itself to beauty. The trend of intelligence is toward righteousness; at the door of error or ignorance is to be laid most of the world's wrong. Stupidity makes for mischief more than all the machinations of the wicked, just as it is the dull edge not the keen that leaves the ugly wound. How often does not the nearly averted tragedy slip through the fingers of some weak though willing Pilate.

When moral codes depart too far from the quick proof of expediency and from discernible consequences of welfare, they get beyond gauge or influence. In the tremblors of fate the close-clutching bungalow of reality fares better than structures of pretension.

## MORAL POLARITY

Ethics must not lose sight or accentuation of the prosaic cogency out of which the fine flower of its sanctity grows. The primitive commandments were also promulgations of health and public policy. When too attenuated of self-evidence, precepts cease to compel: no sanction can endure an over-long suspension, but requires a visible vesting in fact. If in the moral world the statute against perpetuities had been more rigorously enforced, fewer soul-strangling codes and customs had been fastened upon mankind.

The pleasurableness of primary functions is an augury that their elaboration should be of like character. Since it was necessary for their perpetuation and for our protection that instincts should be made inviting, the same necessity is predictable of that development of them which constitutes the

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

complex conduct of to-day. The mere expansion of existence does not alter the character of its emphasis upon right. If life is allowed to become joyless, nature's very beacon-light of guidance is frustrated and lost. The agreeable is *prima facie* the good; upon its denial lies the burden of proof. The evidence by which civilization has sustained this burden constitutes morality. Conscience comes in only at the point of our own self-conflict. There is reason for everything that there is no reason against, and restriction has always to justify itself; inquisitorial ethics must first establish jurisdiction. Function makes out its case—it is for reason to rebut. When unperverted, the dictates of desire are directions of health: our wishes point to our welfare. To obey the impulses of freshness and fatigue—to act, to vary, to cease, in con-

## MORAL POLARITY

formity with the ebb and flow of zest —all this keeps us keen in feeling and action. Duty has many directing voices and that of happiness is the most authoritative; we characterize well the apt thought as a happy one. Pleasure and pain are the potent formative influences because instinctive and immediate in application. It is not by following proprieties and time-cards and itineraries that large purposes effectuate themselves, but by natural self-sequences: conscience should be the automatic brake that stops the car of action only when it gets detached from the train of normal impulse. Everything enacted by the commons of the moment, as restrained by the senate of the mind and the constitutionality of the heart, is lawful.

Nature restores to us the latitude of which a straitened formalism de-

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

prived us. What has man done that he must forfeit the gladness bestowed upon his fellow-creatures of the animate world? Creation produces its great opus not through criticism, but through love—not through thwarting, but through pleasing itself. To such an extent is creativeness an affair of self-realization that in the name—though to the shame—of art its ignoble disciples grow not merely sensuous, but sensual.

Men become set in their ways when they have discovered the demands of their genius. The skilled mariner holds to the uttermost on the long leg of the tack. We go by our feelings once we have learned the deeper wisdom out of which these speak, and seen the safety of their leading. The more we understand ourselves the more we humour self and therefore the more it yields us: when we do as we please

## MORAL POLARITY

we are headed the right way, and thereafter go forward; with normal natures *sic itur ad astra*. A sound and untrammelled heart is the secret of success and happiness.

## RESPONSIVENESS

WHATEVER is sibylline to the mood is sacred. The nature and importance of things is determined for each one by his reaction upon them. We owe ourselves to the experiences that develop us, no matter how otherwise adverse; men often benefit us quite against their intention. All that keys perception or tunes thought, instrumentalizes us; only he is to me musician who pulls out the stops of my soul.

Our friends fulfil themselves up to our responsiveness. As the palms and flowers of Italy advertise an unfelt clemency in the wintry air, even so praise makes one conscious of hitherto unrecognized merits. Traits slough off

## RESPONSIVENESS

if sympathy stops; men finally lose faith in what their fellows cannot see. When an influential personality sets, the whole domain of experience for which it stood seems to go out of existence. Though the least censure makes one inwardly plead guilty to a general worthlessness, yet if the world pat him on the back, though for a trifle, every fault at once appears venial. It is noticeable that under the sunshine of adulation successful men become genial: life, because a continual laudation of themselves, seems a continual approbation of others. To such an extent may character be awakened to any response demanded of it, that upon its unoccupied tracts ‘Will build to suit tenant’ might be displayed. Mistrust always hampers, but appreciation brings out new powers.

Our attitude is returned to us compounded: if we treat others humanly,

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

they treat us angelically; if inhumanly, they treat us diabolically. Violence is a bludgeon and provokes violence in return, but considerateness gains the opponents' favour. It is not poverty and depravity that foment revolution so much as the bitterness engendered by their treatment. Leave stomachs sick for food and there will be consequences that make the stomach sick for fear. Society does not realize the provocation there is for those that feel the hand of the world against them. We change men little by convicting them; but once convinced they change themselves. When the heart melts, it moves. Reasonableness wins all men to its side: a considerate majority has the minority's support, a magnanimous government consolidates the country. We draw out the kindness of those against whom we do not defend our-

## RESPONSIVENESS

selves; from an enemy, the better our argument the less our justice, but let him do you some harm and you convert him. It is according to others' need of us that we give ourselves; many friendships are founded on pity. To such as seek mercy or forgiveness, the whole generosity of our nature goes out.

Every one raises or lowers the level of faith in all about him; by improving ourselves we increase the value of all contiguous property. When we live beautifully, we beautify the scene and comply with the æsthetic demands of our environment. Any deep intercourse reveals the standards we are to meet and are expected to satisfy. There are books that begin new epochs in our lives. Men track what they tread: a good act is a *propaganda fidei* and spreads belief in God. All excellence

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

is a divine revelation, all hardness of heart teaches universal godlessness; the course of the world is felt to be a reflection upon the mind that animates it. There is no such moral menace to the community as to permit a seeming inversion of the issues of good and evil —to leave the reward of right outwardly unaccentuated but that of evil obvious. If the practical value of virtue be denied, it is difficult to retain a sense of its infinite worth. Every addition to human greatness endows man with a more distinguished name. Let us be lofty and clear of clouds, for men look up to us, the years look back to us.

## PROPORTION

THE processes of the mind are little affected by the media in which it works. Unaltered are the problems of existence whether to their statement the three zeros of sublimity be added or not; of whatever units experience may be composed its proportions remain very much the same. Everything we treat commercially is merchandise: to the huckster his flowers are but a weariness and a burden. It is no more idealistic to traffic in pomegranates than in potatoes; no lighter are the griefs of life in Italy than where we are. The fortunate and the unfortunate are equally beset with perplexities and vexations. Clouds of trouble come up with the

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

sun of joy and rob us of its sunshine. We do not get so much more as we imagined when we lick the platter of happiness. Every choice imposes the penalty of some negation; to be freed of fear and dread is to be deprived of the great pleasures of relief and reassurance. How many a successful man has wished back the old days of his poverty or obscurity.

Life's altitudes are of slow discrimination: all hills are alike high that reach the clouds. Others impress us unduly by a knowledge which we do not possess: for being ourselves ignorant of a subject we impute to them a larger familiarity with it than is actually theirs. The reason why men of ability appear to us exaggeratedly capable is that we suppose them to be what they are in addition to what we are, instead of, as is usually the case,

## PROPORTION

simply in lieu of it. Goodness, if merely glimpsed, is imagined as indefinitely extensive: the great seem unlimitedly so. All coins are current where the credit is once established: ordinary phrases are quoted from the well-known pen. Let us but speak a brave word or do a brave deed and we are forever after lauded for our little ones. Though usually excluded at law, evidence of general reputation is admissible in life—and counts for too much. One pictures another's present condition as he does his own past, namely, with the disagreeables left out. We see the glory and renown of great achievement and are tempted to wish them for ourselves; little, however, do we realize what denials and struggles they exact—never do men know what they ask when they would be first in the kingdom of heaven. The illustrious career

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

gives small outward hint of its inward rigour: to laugh with the sun means also to weep with the rain, to faint with the heat, to freeze with the cold. Before we covet the ends let us make sure that we covet the means as well. Envy is curable by even a small dose of life: experience soon contents one with his own by minimizing all else.

The world rates us according to the magnitude of our affairs; but our own size is independent of theirs and due to the way we deal with them. Littleness of character is not necessarily cured by the enlargement of our lot, nor innate largeness lessened by straitened circumstances: though the periphery of experience increases, our particular segment of it subtends no wider angle of outlook. It is mainly the same qualities that, according to their sphere of application, pass for distin-

## PROPORTION

guished or ordinary. The commanding features of the landscape owe their grandeur to position: mountains are but every-day earth that would claim no attention but for its fortuitous elevation; the great waters would excite little admiration were they otherwise dispersed.

In energy expended rather than in result accomplished lies the true measure of labour: failure ofttimes works harder than success, and weariness may bring nothing but discouragement. Life is not an affair of fixed magnitudes but of relative effects. Alike beautiful are the shadows on the lawn and the sun-pools in the woods; grateful after glare is the rain. The index of our pleasure lies not in the gift, but in its relation to our wish; how little dependent upon the scale of living is the happiness of life. We are as much moved by the sweet vale as by the stu-

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

pendous valley: the suggestiveness of the scene is due to its modulation more than to its measure. From Venetian quays, it is not to the towering Alps that the eye turns with delight but rather to the dreamy outline of the Euganean Hills.

The differences of condition among men have not the unfairness that would appear. One thinks of the wealthy and well-loving as having first choice in everything, and others as putting up with whatever is left; but in point of fact the second choice best suits the second chooser. We soon come to see that the world in general is astonishingly well accommodated. Suitability is a tactful master of ceremonies. All qualities find their affinities at last; and even inferiority is content for it prefers the inferior.

Everywhere the constant kindness of life is apparent if one but studies the

## PROPORTION

workings of compensation whereby in essential conditions a universal equality is effected. Insight makes us not only 'without hope to rise' but equally 'without fear to fall': the turn of fortune contains no terror. Though we note the apparently disproportionate price that one person must pay for the same thing that another obtains free, we note also that the value of it is to each of them accordingly, and so no injustice committed. The cruelty of externals is neutralized by the mercifulness of our reaction upon them. Whatever we adapt ourselves to, we adopt and make ours: accommodation is a shelter in which there is always room for us. Every man unconsciously, the wise man intentionally, tempers standards to his shorn condition. Only what strikes below the belt of our philosophy fells us; submission, like a fort of palmetto

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

logs, lets all cannon-shot of circumstance sink in harmlessly. The inevitable calls out man's great docility; the waters of assimilation round in their current all edges of difficulty and smooth the surface of all stones of hardship. Happiness is democratic and reserves a place for every one in the joyful republic of living.

The full sail of favour easily jibes, but when beating close-hauled against adversity we can always come up quickly into the wind of safety. Those in humble station have a monopoly of as many advantages as they forego. Theirs is an unmortgaged enjoyment that cannot be foreclosed. The great world must bow and smirk and dance the quadrille of honour: only the obscure have the privilege of their own mood. The motor-car of idleness seems to cover with the dust of inferiority those that

## PROPORTION

trudge along the way—it is by them alone, however, that the roadside is appreciated. Small lives like small towns live centrally to their best, while metropolitan existence, though it contains more, has it at greater remove. Any conspicuousness restrains liberty; the sight-seer becomes himself the sight. Prominence deprives us of the undistorted truth: we cannot see aright if lifted too far above the scene. No duty that privilege imposes is fully paid for by the gratification it bestows: when others equal or surpass us in any excellence we may well be glad that they divide with us its responsibilities. All knowledge makes one increasingly answerable: where enjoyment may be had without ownership, it is preferable—beyond that, possession is onerous. One gets the most out of life from the least that gives it: a

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

little confers all without its care. Money is useful only for spiritual spending and material saving: its sole advantage lies in the opportunity to forget it, and so to be free.

In darkness the light of the heart shines bright: deprivation reveals our true wealth, as a confession of one's ignorance brings his wisdom into relief. Always when fortune waxes we fret over some niggardliness in its generosity; but when it wanes we rejoice that it is not worse. No sky seems so fair as one in which some storm is remotely brewing; no scene so alluring as one suddenly disclosed through a break in the clouds. Reflections that assuage sorrow are very likely to dampen joy, as a coloured glass that beautifies the ugly, perverts beauty: the trees protect us from the rain, yet give us their own shower

## PROPORTION

later on. How sordid-looking the sunshine of prosperity makes surroundings that but now against the background of adversity seemed so delightful. Praise only unsettles us and sends us overweeningly in search of unsatisfying external sanctions; but by criticism we are driven to the sources of inner approval. All realization checks motive; under excess of incentive the mind wavers.

The proportions of life favour the poor. None but the simple can face the world with sincerity: mankind admonishes the wealthy at every turn. No less unhappy is it to be exposed to envy than to feel it; luxury must withdraw itself within deep parks of selfishness and hide itself behind strong gateways of privacy, lest it suffer some contact—and therefore confront some contrast—that would accuse it of in-

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

humanity. The higher the temperature of prosperity, the colder is the current of uneasiness that draws through the closed windows of its outlook.

The real miseries of man are not those into which either misfortune or want plunges him, but those due to his own perverseness. It is only the superfluities of life that impose its load: on every hand our dissatisfaction and greed commit us to the defensive of happiness. We plant causes whose consequences we must combat, and become involved in an altercation with nature. Desire spurs us on to dangers from which safety shrinks. Everywhere we encounter the contradictions of our requirements and the penalties of our pleasures. The sweets that delight bring the flies that annoy; the food that fattens tempts the rats that infest. Riches attract envious eyes and sur-

## PROPORTION

round with false friends. At the height of the revelry we are struck miserable.

To excel is a source of sadness as well as of pride. From ambitiously seeking to equal our superiors, we find ourselves at last regretfully and vainly seeking even our equals. Most position is due to mere survivorship and is therefore tinged with loneliness. It is always a shock to discover that those to whom we looked for information are themselves looking up to us as authorities. More entrancing is the prospect of the sea across the gardens and palaces of the great than from the shore itself. We forfeit the foreground by advancing.

Things are true only on the plane of life that saw or said them. How delicious under the awning is the summer day, yet how fierce is its glare. The glorious cloud-banks of sunset, what

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

are they when reached but mere mist?  
Mountains sink as we climb them:  
the imposing dwindle as we draw near.  
When our dreams come true, we wish  
back our dreams. Far happier is it to  
fall short of our ideals than to have  
none; to disobey God than to disbelieve  
in Him. Portless is the sail that looks  
for no Atlantis of the western wave.

## SPONTANEITY

TO feel restraint is equivalent to being bound: freedom is sentimental and not confined to fact. With men as with cattle it makes no difference that the stake to which they are tethered is unsubstantial. The mere indifference of others is disapproval; their disapproval, opposition. Our peace of mind becomes entangled in the web of their subjectivity. The point of view of uncongenial persons makes us as wretched as their lot would. All influence is infectious and menaces our spiritual independence. A commanding personality is a dictatorship.

No one can altogether escape the colour and idiom of his conscious en-

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

vironment. It is difficult not to weigh truth and beauty in the scales of acceptability rather than of intrinsic worth; the patronage that mere wealth bestows upon art degrades it. Conventional standards and usages are an infringement of personal liberty. The injection of a thought inimical to our mood scatters us and it is long before we find ourselves again; our mental life is at the mercy of whoever accosts us. What such intrusive impertinence as another's unsolicited recital of his experiences? At all points self is exposed to assault. The relevancies of speech divert from the relevancies of thought: a false note is an invasion. The surreptitious intermediacy of approach enjoyed by letters, advertisements, the telegraph, the telephone, procures for them a privilege of access denied to personal interview, just

## SPONTANEITY

as out-of-town friends obtain a precedence of attention. Of every congested life the problem is how to maintain a detached personality; simply to supply the soul with fresh air is become a feat of spiritual engineering.

Not until we get beyond the range of others is the cohesive gravitation of our own sphere felt. The strong lead their life alone, and fraternize only toward evening; but weakness assembles and talks. The sole neutrality is to keep at arm's length. Admit guests and you admit silent critics; to appeal to others is to give them a right to reprove. By protracted companionship with those of a different age we forfeit our own; long association with the elderly limits our powers to their outlook. Every incapable person casts a spell of incapacity over us.

Crowding kills. Unwittingly we are

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

drawn into the whirlpool of lives about us; all contact invites participation—we cannot remain impassive if we observe. Exclusiveness is the only park of broad acres in which one may live spaciously: wherever I am alone is a study and a temple. In the press of surroundings we become mere conglomerates; but left to ourselves we cut out slabs of our own stone. Nature loves her vast tracts of vacancy and summons forth from them her tonic forces. Space is the wide range of the spheres and the open speedway of light; far out upon the boundless seas, deep in the trackless forests, solitude recharges the exhausted breath of mankind with life-giving energy.

Amid close contacts the mind is kept ever on the defensive. The fear of interruption is interruption. It is impossible to be with men and remain

## SPONTANEITY

uninfluenced by their opinion of us. The surrounding atmosphere of expectation depresses the barometer of our spontaneity: all opinion is an undue influence, all criticism duress. The greater our individuality the more resolute are we under external trammels upon it, because the more in need of conditions that encourage and foster self-assertion. No strong legs will endure the swathings of convention; the wings of every fledged soul beat themselves free.

## PROGRESSION

**I**NITIATIVE is a new creation and founds fresh dynasties of energy.

None can foresee the efflorescence of his dream or the fruitage of his act. To awaken thought is to arouse the whole mind: the wide country-side of the soul harkens to the crowing of any chanticleer. Whatsoever takes form in consciousness quickly receives the breath of life; the pioneer thought is the vanguard of all improvement. Every act of strength makes us strong; industry, once will, is soon habit. The knee of power gives way from disuse more than from weakness. Unless lived to their limit capacities do not increase; we make room for our waiting

## PROGRESSION

potentialities only by disposing of our actualities. Continuous disappointment is in store for mere expectancy, but effort meets continuous reward. The incentive as well as the strength comes through performance; let us think no more about our duties but simply do them.

Every advance forces us further: we move with gathering momentum along our way. The reason one is committed to what he begins is that he is led on by it; some false shame of inconsistency keeps one to his purpose. Course and destination are often determined by the mere accidental direction of start. As every hurt seems to go straight to a sensitive spot, so every step is a fresh impetus to the mood in which we find ourselves. All influences when reinforced by consciousness become cumulative; contin-

## SOUL AND CIRCUMSTANCE

uation is a kitten to the thread of our thought. Perpetual motion seems approximated where spiritual reaction is involved. Though all the material universe whirls to a finish and vibrates to a stop, spiritual vitality goes on undiminished and conscious existence becomes ever more expansive. It would seem as if the full-grown soul were to sit upon the ruins of the world about it and to dwell amid static gravitation and shadowless day.

Most selections are determined by accidents of contiguity. We do not exercise discretion as often as we think: fate picks our favourites the while we believe ourselves backing fancy. Our preferences prove little but our poverty of choice; when other suitors appear, constancy is shaken. All popularity is fickle and runs after the last arrival; seasonal resorts are frequented simply

## PROGRESSION

in default of genialness elsewhere, and become deserted again as soon as the ice melts or the sun cools. Even beneath conditions most likely to be selective, the workings of necessity are detected. The friendships, the environment of persons apparently having the world to choose from, furnish a continual surprise to such as do not perceive the special requirement of disposition finding in them its satisfaction or response. In the matter of surroundings, more controlling than all other considerations of suitability are the needs of our own self-establishment; there is no such attractiveness in others as their admiration of us. It is these personal exigencies that not only restrict our judgment but conceal our fickleness. Under an unlimited range of election neither prejudice nor loyalty could long survive. Were men

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absolutely free to choose and free to change, all individual adhesion, all social cohesion would cease, all organization fall asunder.

How wide a difference in practice is split by a small difference in theory; scarcely perceptible in origin, how soon is not direction all determinative! With utmost difficulty must we later reach the road which but now at its divergence offered itself as freely as the one we followed. Sweet at the lips is every dish of delight—careless of consequence, however, beyond the senses' palate. There is in every new experience some accompaniment which we take to be characteristic and continuing, yet which merely ushers it in and then retires. The syrup that invites, entraps; the sunlight that attracts, betrays. Few routes preserve throughout the character of their beginning. In the easy-

## PROGRESSION

chair of indulgence we grow stoop-shouldered, but the unsupported soul sits straight. It is our sins that age us —our self-denials keep us young.

For maladjustments defeat is the only thorough-going cure: to patch up a basic mistake is but the more plainly to reveal the fundamental botch. Fate is kinder to us than favour; discipline is not indifference to suffering but simply an agreement with nature's preferences. Unhappiest those with the will but not the courage for evil. Denial as well as satisfaction stills sense and quiets the soul; each instant raises a question between expression or repression. Experience, the expert whip, drives the whole self upon the threefold rein of urge, of consent, of restraint. As nature purifies itself by periodic winters of extermination, so without the correctional cold of disfavour, our

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inner growth would become riotous and beget fearsome creatures of the soul. It is the killing frosts of fate that keep down both the exuberance of life and the putrefactions of death, maintaining the moral air sweet and wholesome.

The application of truth to our individual experience oft-times meets with a reception far different from that of its general statement; we find assent to principle not necessarily carrying with it in our own case consent to its particularizations. This is the moral enigma which, however philosophy may explain, it cannot explain away. Self is cloven to the core and clashes. The internal fight is on, whatever we may say about it or however dub its warring factions. Whether it be good versus evil, knowledge versus ignorance, prudence versus pleasure, Ormuzd versus Ahriman, God versus the devil—it is

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all one in outcome, extinction to the worsted self-half. Reason when unrivalled rules; but once treason raises its head, so evenly are the contending forces matched, that the issue turns upon the allies called in. The doctrine of original sin is no confession of human depravity but rather an honest admission of man's radical warfare. From the mystery of internal antagonism, the marvel of our sedition and civil war, the April weather struggle between fair and foul, the mortal conflict between desire and duty, no mere moralizing can set us free. The fatalities of the feud are spread before us—we are left to account for them as best we may.

Even the skirmishes cost their dead and wounded; we fall no less gloriously though in a small fight. Already on the preliminary motions of life is the

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final judgment foreshadowed. Each moment is reaping the reward or paying the penalty of some predecessor. We ourselves evoke whatever reception we meet with. The ease of later years is the earned increment of early struggle; the difficulties are the third and fourth generation of early skulking. Large is the wealth of him that gathers his whole harvest; per contra, from every evil act, from all bad workmanship go out causative ripples in every direction unceasingly — somewhere in existence, in others or in ourselves, a resultant ill moves on. No one can slight performance without entailing upon the posterity of time a long inheritance of discouragement, resulting in some set-back to character, some retardation of mankind. How can we drowse with the crises of life, the crisis of death, still ahead! Worlds

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are whirling to carry out the creative design, while we sit twirling our thumbs. The issues of destiny are fought out upon a series of viewless, bloodless battle-fields: in a succession of apparently inconsiderable reconnaissances the stake of happiness is lost or won. Though we avert consequences that are outward, the inward still register themselves beyond reach and determine our spiritual occupancy; were conscience silenced, the remonstrant stomach, the depleted pulse, the joyless heart would nevertheless speak out. It is forever amazing that we can treat so slightingly the arbiters of all that is to come—that we are so little concerned to make ourselves good company, seeing that we have got to endure it. There is no one whom we so eagerly seek or so incontinently flee as ourselves: from

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the fearful imprisonment of personality there is no escape but in self-expansion. More quickly and easily do we surround ourselves with the qualities we like by living them than by seeking friends who possess them. We dwell with the beautiful by mere dwelling upon it; such companionship is not only the end and object of all things, but is itself the means thereto.

The shoulders broaden to their burden: capability comes only when summoned. When we consider our powers we have none, but when we consider the need we are omnipotent. The things we accomplish are not so much those of which we are capable as those of which we think ourselves capable. The demands of others develop us: incumbency itself fits for office. Spiritual as well as physical nature abhors a vacuum: the soul, like

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the air, expands to its contiguous space. He that obeys the call has the performance in him already.

Nothing is so difficult but that intervening events lead up to it: each moment uncovers the motive for the next. We do what we cannot through doing what we can; every plug of hindrance pulled is followed by a rush of thought and action. Even to have deliberated without result or striven without avail endows us with new capacity. In plucking the one berry we see another: the reach shows us the rest. Just as by virtue of survivorship each generation in turn becomes vested with the world's wealth and honours, so all right experience enjoys a continuous accession of power and importance.

One is alternately elated and aghast to find how far the current of the years has carried him. The weakness we

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humoured fulfils all we feared from it. But strength drifts down the stream to the sea and soon dispenses with the harbour-tug and drops the pilot, and all its lumbering helplessness is quickly turned by the fresh breeze of opportunity into seaworthiness.

## THE CHIMES OF EXISTENCE

IT is well that nothing abides or we could not abide it; things are little more transient than their power to please. Upon the table of spiritual relish no dish may appear more than once. A taste tires where we thought eternity would not suffice; days cloudless of care oppress us with their blue. All enjoyment perpetuated is lost; the matchless point of view grows wearisome. Man obtains but never attains; happiness itself fails to make him happy. When we receive all that we asked, we wonder we could have asked so little. The search of the heart is unending.

Nothing is so good but that at times change is better. If perfection is per-

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vasive we grow restless, if lasting we grow listless; from all sameness we turn dissatisfied away. Even long-sought peace drives us by its ennui back into the hateful strife again, and to a perpetuity of propriety even sordid incident seems preferable. We can stand anything better than stagnation; take from a man his bread of security but leave him his tobacco of diversion. The day is insupportable without prospect of event; where routine cuts off the possibility of 'something happening,' life yawns. Futurity is a postman whom all eagerly expect, bring he good news or bad. Where no surprise is possible, there is no delight left: foresight and insight foreclose wonder. Any monotony tolls the bell of existence but variety rings its chimes; not in the notes but in their due and varied sequence lies the melody's charm.

## THE CHIMES OF EXISTENCE

Without diversity there can be no keenness to perception nor edge to efficiency; and such is our cumulative craving for it that at last only sleep suffices. Because it kills suggestiveness, the unchanging checks progressiveness. All normal functions voice the same necessity of diversion: if the body tires from one position, how much more the mind. We stew in our own mood if the thought be not stirred; there is more music in life than the monotonous measure of our heart. Expression must, like tea, be drawn off quickly, lest if it stand long on the leaves of thought, it extract the tannin of morbidness. Repetition outstays the welcome of the mind. To insist is to weaken our cause: dissent gathers, once the favourable impression wears off. Roughness only raises up new opposition to itself and fails of its purpose; but gentleness proselytes.

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More often do we adopt the ways of those whom we overcome than of those who overcome us: Rome became hellenized, not Greece romanized. All emphasis of the obvious is offensive. Though the blatant get the clapping of hands, the contempt of the heart is only concealed. We are blind to the garish, but the subtle captivates at once: we cannot keep our eyes off the dim, hazy peaks.

Thank God for the series of sleep that sharpens wit yet dulls memory, and thus keeps self endurable. As one summer obliterates its predecessor, so each day blots out the preceding; beyond yesterday the past with few exceptions is all of a piece. Not long is it before retrospect becomes so oppressive that we live wholly in the present. Some one untouchable spot may cripple whole epochs of remem-

## THE CHIMES OF EXISTENCE

brance; we inhabit only the pleasant chambers of the heart and close all others. So complete is the insulation of forgetfulness that we are able to move newly-minded amid the memory-haunted scenes.

The more versatile we are, the more variable, and therefore the more in need of variety; sensitiveness changes its dress frequently. Equally necessary to satisfaction are ease and hardship, safety and hazard, labour and leisure; there can be no holidays unless there are few. Though the fixity of locality seems hopeless, the itinerancy of travel seems useless; the fascinating map proves in the following of it but a tiresome schedule. From the hearth how fair looks the world; yet out in its turmoil we find nothing better than to get back again. Where activity seethes, thought quiets down. With even great-

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er expectancy than we sought the exchanges of animation and barter, do we disperse again to the separateness of our contemplation. From all sides the human tide strains centrally to the great city, there only to turn and disgorge itself out again to the satellite suburbs. One looks for the white heat of life on its crowded corners and at its congested centre, but finds instead frantic figures and drawn faces rushing distractedly elsewhither.

Persons that are always the same are not so much inwardly consistent as outwardly indifferent. It is only land-locked souls that keep a constant level: oceanic expanses of spirit are always subject to great mood tides. Life must be translated into many media of expression before it can be understood, and unless we vary with its changes we are unresponsive to its influence. Day

## THE CHIMES OF EXISTENCE

itself is the revolving flash from eternity's headland. Surrounded by such massive variations as those of earth, air and sky, shall man remain stolid? Climate sets the very clef of mood, so that in the mind there must be more than one time or season. And if the body vibrate from buoyant to burdensome, how should its spiritual tenant be stationary? Soul is a water that owes its colour not chiefly to itself but to the ampler skies of influence. Every blue Mediterranean is the liquefied heaven of its south.

Fluctuation is all-prevalent. There is no experience that does not soon evince its inclement days. Were it not for our variance we could not demarcate the unillumined coasts of existence; it is through our intermittence that we are distinctive. What clear sky of idealism but is at times overcast and rain-be-

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teared; the most beautiful effect in the human landscape is the shadow of trouble upon the spiritual heights.

## THE OPEN GATES OF JANUS

CIVILIZATION is a mere *modus vivendi*, and the existent economic order a provisional arrangement which is always ceaselessly, at times suddenly, being superseded. Live and let live is not yet widely applicable. Against the brute forces of existence security continues to post pickets of fear and precaution: against the untamed powers of nature and the unbroken instincts of our brother-man, society still needs protection. The gates of Janus are never closed.

It is but an armed truce that the law affords between good and evil, between the classes and the masses. At every turn the opposing forces confront each

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other—at the polls, on the platform, in the courts; where men are gathered in crowds or when they pass each other singly on the sidewalk; in outbursts of mob violence or in covert attack and robbery; in the master-and-servant relationship of our own household. Even from the fireside hostility is never far.

The wide world goes its separate way, and joint action is confined to areas of mere necessity or selfish advantage; society like water though a solid body if opposed, is yet unsustaining if relied upon. Co-operation is little more than nominal; spheres of helpfulness are mere oases in a desert of individualism. Not even centuries of organized life have sufficed to create such a modicum of concerted action as would ensure to every one the essentials of living. Man is a tribe of peaceably disposed animals; but beyond the surface adjustments in-

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cident to external order, existence is still largely on a war-footing.

The mortalities around us are silent; youth and strength go undisturbed along their way of health. Not sensitive is the ear of civilization to its casualties: from slaughtered beast, from slain humanity, comes no far-heard cry. The injured, the unfortunate, the erring slink out of sight; and because infrequently confronted with their importunacy, the hale and whole are seldom sensible of either their appeal or their plight. It is our substituted association with the living that keeps death from being more vividly brought home to us.

Evolution goes on working out its formative designs by means of the hardships and trials of experience: the extinction of the ill-adapted proceeds apace. Under existing social conditions it is as necessary to the survival of the

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one type of man upon which civilization places its emphasis that all others should be crowded out, as it is in the animal world that one species should in self-preservation exterminate its rival species. The only escape from socio-logical manslaughter lies in so changing conditions that they shall themselves develop all men into the desired type. Until human laws are wholly ameliorative, they must like natural laws continue to be partially destructive.

Only by exclusions can the *status quo* be maintained. In origin most privilege is self-preservation, and generally serves still as a protective measure. Priorities of power, possession, birthright and the like had their inception in and owe their retention to the interests of order. There is no important relationship or activity that to its due conduct or enjoyment does

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not find imperative the practice of some form of exclusiveness—be it of persons or of circumstances. It is frequently observed among representatives of the radical classes that, if elevated to official position, they are forced to hedge themselves about with the very formalities and to avail themselves of the very privileges which they had theretofore denounced as snobbery.

Society resembles nature in being genial only when conformed to; toward the misunderstood, the suspected, the condemned, how little we realize the cruelty of its countenance. By the ill treatment or rough replies occasionally received from those that misplace us, are our eyes opened to the general attitude most men encounter—and many merit. The captive looks out upon a world from which mere exclusion alters the entire aspect.

Participation in that perversion of social life miscalled ‘society,’ when not due to some defect of temperament, is usually motived by selfish ends. Friend cultivates friend for profit, and self-seeking exploits the forms of hospitality. All well-poised persons soon fall away from such shams—the unambitious and noble scorn them *ab initio*. Great purpose is seldom seen abroad. We become scarce as we find ourselves, and practise both a natural and inevitable exclusiveness. In every personal environment there will be found some lack of appreciation, upon which, whether antagonistic or merely derisory, sensitiveness is forced to turn its back.

To others we are always a matter of far less observation than we think, and of even less concern. Men are separated from us by whatever separates us from them: the bridge is down both

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ways. We have the measure of the world's indifference toward us in our indifference toward it. The ordinary contacts of mankind afford little opportunity for mutual understanding; so few are the occasions of even external community that we are reduced to meeting at meals. Most lives touch like shipboard acquaintances only at their node of transit and share little of their enlargements beyond.

Liberty of thought scatters the flock. Unanimity exists only in the class-room; outside, every practical question is a matter of uncertainty calling for private judgment, and is settled by every one differently. Graduation not only confers the privilege of divergence but thereunto imposes the duty. After the initial gregariousness, companionship is no longer to be looked for; at best we may expect an occasional flash of ap-

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preciation or a tacit general sympathy. Though we traverse the same ocean, our keels never furrow the same salt.

As the rough inexorableness of nature appears in unexpected places through the smooth surface of our serenity, so crude fact everywhere crops through the ideal. The margins of morality like those of safety are narrow: society like all terrestrial existence is never far distant from catastrophe. Mankind has not yet emerged from the woods of savagery as far as the flower of its cultivation would lead to infer. Upon the clearings of character and civilization the forest of primitive instinct presses hard, and only by perpetual weeding can we keep back the bracken and bush and sapling whose insidious inroads always presage a reclamation of the soil by the wilderness.

## SUPREME PURPOSES

PRECISION restricts growth; philosophy cannot long remain true unless it keeps open house to facts and is cordial to all comers. Too insistent an orderliness conflicts with the wider arrangements of existence: though system helps, an exact adherence to it confines and crushes. Any excess of carefulness in one direction is bound to mean carelessness in another. As memory is the strong point of little minds, so is it the weak point of great minds. Mere sentimentality bars progress; better to be without feeling where feeling is without avail. In every occupation the hyper-sensitive are handicapped: circumspection blocks ac-

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complishment, criticism clogs creativeness. A peace-at-any-price policy inevitably brings stagnation and invites eventual disaster. Only robust sentiment and blunt words meet the requirements of raw reality. It is impossible to preserve an even surface of propriety: things happen as they must, and appearances have to take care of themselves as best they may. The large inchoate self is the chaotic but creative America of the soul. The days when cares less confined us and when enthusiasms had free hand were days when great ideals most actuated our lives: our heroic age was our epic age.

All inward liberty subordinates the appearance of the whole to the welfare of the parts; a complete product is not obtained save by the full scope of its factors. Unless it expresses an informing health, the profile of society, like

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facial expression and bodily figure, fails of beauty. There is more hope in the anarchy and bewilderment of individualism than in any communal uniformity that checks personal development. Public order cannot be judged by its prevalence but only by the extent to which this exists without enforcement. It is merely in formulation that laws are legislative—both in origin and in sanction they are social. An irregularity indicative of freedom is more profoundly beautiful than any symmetry produced by constraint. Just as men prove individually more interesting than collectively they would appear to be, so in contradiction to the outward confusion and ugliness of the community is the culture of character and home. How scarred by its garden walls seems the wooded hill-side, how broken its even green by the dwellings

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that do it; yet are these incident to local embellishment, implying landscape-gardening and interior decoration.

Progress leaves a ragged wake of ruin, and must depend upon some red cross of samaritanism to bring up the rear. Philanthropies, ethics, æsthetics are mere camp-followers of mankind's advance and are impotent to restrain the race from the rough route of its forward movement. The larger order is not nice. Though refinement exceeds expectation, brutality also astounds by its extent. Mere brawn and muscle are everywhere the bases of existence, and every new field of enterprise increases the demand for them. Upon the inventories of materialism the priceless items are stated as of no value. We must sell our hay unless we can finance the finer crops ourselves.

## SUPREME PURPOSES

Not yet is the day when the red war of outward expansion may give place to the white peace of inward development. The world's work is still conducted under the lash: contract entered into under the duress of industrialism is but a veneer for servitude. From 'might makes right' to 'majority makes right' is not necessarily a great step forward; truth still dwells with the minority however much political optimists may blink the fact, and democracy can never justify itself until it has given effect to its fundamental assumption of equal education, cultivation and opportunity for all.

Most evils go to a tragic extreme before culmination; an incredible climax is reached. The pendulum of error attains the point of terror, the bad wreaks its worst upon the best. Heroic truth has ever gone a *via crucis*; trag-

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edy is epitomized in that surcharged trinity of words: They crucified Him. Nothing short of catastrophe to the perfect suffices to rend the veil of the existent and rouse lethargy from its sleep; except through death life cannot prove itself completely. Nature resents every denial and inevitably rises to reaffirmation: resurrection is but the natural rebound of life. Only into the night of negation rises the soul's unquenchable star.

Supreme purposes always exact an unreservedness of devotion that destroys their instrumentalities: not often does fate permit to the illustrious an anti-climax. Fame is an ivy of the ruins. Great deeds spend the doer—we pluck life only out of the jaws of death. There is no undertaking but risks offence, failure, disaster: with every venture we put our very lives in jeop-

## SUPREME PURPOSES

ardy, for all spiritual wounds are physically mortal. A gradual sacrifice of health, patience under declining strength—herein is heroism no less than in facing any sudden fate. In fact it is life itself that kills; death is the consummation of forces continuously in operation since birth, and like every due demolition is implicated in construction. Not even from the most sheltered lot or cautiously led existence can the destructive agencies encompassing it be excluded. To all organisms the end comes normally, not as a misadventure, but as the full bloom and ripened result of instinct and natural activities. Recipes for longevity do not lengthen, but only protract: attempts to guard and so preserve life defeat their end, effecting *pro tanto* its immediate loss. Save by fatal acts we cannot educe the full self; it is when desperate

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that we display our parts and sound the tone of our whole sonorousness. We both die by living and live by dying—through its forfeiture life becomes eternal. At the cost of bodily beauty we win our laurels, at the expense of youth achieve our fame. Green to be sure is the olive of victory, yet withered the hand outstretched to take it.

Death is the final renunciation that all men are called upon to make in the cause of progress; yet by old age this is rendered not only unregretful but grateful. More than so far is it permitted no man to follow the advance; upon some Joshua of a fresher generation does it always devolve to go forward with the standards of achievement and enter the promised land of fulfilment. As fleshly decline buys spiritual advancement, so by virtue of our indi-

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vidual abdication the race reigns. The demise of the body is, like fragrance, the generosity of substance and the very swan-song of fruition.

## THE MASK OF CIRCUMSTANCE

HEROISM is a ship that looks so romantic at sea, so dingy at the dock. There is no delight or disaster that does not soon drop into the jog-trot of days: our precious experiences that once meant so much to us, merge finally in mere general credits on account. The startling finds no niche in the quiet hall of fame, and discoveries that at first astounded the world are simply filed away in the orderly desk of truth. Squalid commonplace squats even upon Mediterranean shores and amid Arcadian scenes: from the universal vulgarity of the mid-day dinner there is no escape. The importunacy of circumstance is all-preva-

## THE MASK OF CIRCUMSTANCE

lent; storm or shine the incessant craft of daily duty put to sea.

It is the blindness of experience that makes it so hard to bear; yet this is the very essence of its discipline. The moment could not be heroic if it were consciously so. Life is a purse that requires us, in getting at any one compartment, to close all others: to see the larger significance of anything that occupies us is difficult. Rarely does the modern voyage of existence afford an uninterrupted sight of the sea, or even of the decks: it is only in young communities that the total view yet survives to the individual. The tendency of labour is to withdraw us from the open air of events and to impose restraint and coercion. Destiny prepares itself in the pale secrecy of earth and brain.

All things, when action approaches, seem to diminish in importance and in-

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crease in difficulty. Incidents that in fact give life a new start, appear at the time only to retard it; those that in fact give it a newer and firmer foundation, only to subvert it. Few are the peaks in life that catch the sun of distinction. Even epoch-making events are wont to wear the momentary guise of diversions from the main issue. Unprofitableness is never so self-apparent as when it begins to turn itself to profit, nor laziness so glaring as when it first throws off its lethargy. Unless there is progress, the delay is not galling: to the callous the world wags along very well. So exalted must be our standards in order to accomplish anything pre-eminent that perseverance can scarcely cope with discouragement. The modesty of most creative workers is due to their contact with the immensity still remaining undone. Every large soul

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brings its littleness to the bar of its breadth—and lives humbly.

Our proven powers are a gross underestimate of our possibilities; only by believing ourselves to be what we are not, can we ever become what we are. To be matter-of-fact as to our capacity is death. It takes art to tell us our extent: music surprises us at our infinity. Careers are limited only as they accept bounds. One cannot feel magnified by any reputation if it is deserved, for he is more than any mere evidence of himself; pride is by its very nature a sign of over-valuation. Only men without courage parade it: braggarts think themselves valiant even when their opponent yields. A noble discontent registers the struggling soul and even impatience shows us to be far-bound. Life is expectant tasting. We rate self by what we exact of it:

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genius divides with no lesser claim. The heart's divinity always suffers spiritual homesickness.

All meanings grow abashed and self-effacing in our presence. The living moment has no colour of its own, but, chameleon-like, takes that of some future to which it looks forward or of some past to which it looks back. There seems offered us only the unrest of transition to a better that is not yet or the peacefulness of a good that is no more—anticipatory youth or reminiscent age, constructive Americas or finished Europes.

How prone is discouragement to forget that all former achievement was equally beset with difficulty and doubt: the path of glory is ever a miry road to him that travels it. Golgothas of triumph become sanctified by veneration and their grim lesson is lost; the

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sacredness of the cross has supplanted its profanation. What to the combatants was the field of victory but a dark, slippery place of struggle? There is but one battle-ground—the here and the now.

Unlike the optical, spiritual perspective enlarges: the past is a dais. Imagination mounts the great figures of history on horseback and invests them with deification: we are all Aztecs, to whom the cavalry of events seems like a gallop of the gods. Beneath every halo, however, or grand pose or golden sky lived in truth a simple humanity, concerned chiefly with every-day interests: the ruins we sentimentalize were often the seat of flagrant living. From no romantic age, place or occasion was the wet-blanket of reality absent. The day always thinks itself degenerate—no longer do the ancient towers of

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time vibrate to thrilling hours but to a mere monotony of existence. Yet the unnoted victories of civilization are being won the while. Deaf must be the ear that cannot through the clatter of circumstance hear the steady onmarch of humanity, shaking the very earth.

Unless we live with insight, we shall not look back without regret. Men hasten through the days in search of what the days themselves contain: they press on to the destination only to find on reaching it that what they came for was passed on the way. The ends of life are not at the end. The safe mooring from which we confidently cast off —how eagerly we strive to regain it; to the dear harbour from which we impatiently put forth, how keen though vain our wish to return! All day long we pursue our toil neglectful of the sun, yet once set, every eye turns with regretful

## THE MASK OF CIRCUMSTANCE

gaze toward the untenanted west: youth is so fair—only afterward.

It behooves us to step softly and tread gently, for who knows upon what memory we may not even now be setting foot? Our o'ershadowing presence beclouds our path. To itself consciousness seems merely to be taking notes for further elaboration; life moves under a constant illusion of later revision and review. Everywhere one observes preparations for a holiday that is never held. Men look forward to some great day of fulfilment, and only little by little does it dawn upon them that the day is already at hand. The fleeting proves to be the permanent.

## BABEL

THE congestion of life loads attention with more experiences than it can liquidate into joy: happiness is forced into bankruptcy by a run on its perfectly solvent capacity. The expansion of our soul and the safe credit of our fancy collapse under the importunate demands of phenomena. Let us conduct no larger a business with existence than the capital of enjoyment warrants, opening our doors to no more than we can accommodate. When apperceptions exceed susceptibility, they impose impossibilities upon it: what we have no room for we cannot take in. The dishes are removed while we are still eating and ever fresh

## BABEL

ones placed before us. In the midst of our superabundant blessings we taste none of them.

Modern existence is a very car-window of impression and fatigue. The soul is crazed by the assaults of the city: attention lives on the rack. Multiplication of potentialities has so multiplied dangers that life is largely engrossed in safely crossing its tracks. The very demands that raise the physical requirements of the race reduce its physique: only the huge business of the day can stagger under its cost. There is no way for civilization to escape from the burden of its budget save by a general disarmament of its material requirements: did we care only for the important, the greater part of the world's work would be unnecessary. Most lives are mortgaged to mere existence, leaving but a small

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equity of enjoyment. The juggernaut of commercialism crushes men by way of broadening them, and irons them flat by way of smoothing the path of mankind.

Superfluity fills the world; experience is chock-a-block and asks only for relief. The soul is buried beneath the drift of circumstance and struggles like an entombed miner for extrication. We long since gathered more data than we can ever avail ourselves of. The new is unnecessary: everything resembles what we know already and leads to no further conclusion. Number does not change the issue raised by instance, but simply confuses its statement: the salient fact is smothered in its incidentals. Upon us seeking the all-round view, men impose their angle of partial vision—to our general remark they answer specifically. So enveloped

## BABEL

in the flummuries of worldly honour are ability and character that it is difficult any longer to detect the real thing for which they stand. All that is not conducive is seductive: the danger of accessories is that they generally distract and often desecrate. More than enough for the purpose is too much for it: possession beyond need is a burden.

Upon experience enjoyment imposes a natural limit: why gain the whole world and lose our capacity to appreciate it? It is still necessary to ‘count our mercies’ would we perceive them; let us constantly be telling the beads of our pleasure. Just as one enjoys nothing when seeing everything, so when seeing nothing he enjoys everything; in default of other interest even the monotonous wall-paper of existence interests us. Things do not lose their force or effect from their prevalence but

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from our insensibility. Over-experience affords no experience whatsoever, for values vanish; only under restriction can anything register its importance. How often where we had awaited from friends eager expectancy, have we not found our advent to be only an added complication in their already over-crowded lives. The soul is stricken with reception beyond perception. We are wholly unable to live up to the accumulations of experience already ours, yet keep constantly amassing a larger fortune of them: a glutted attention is testified to on all sides by worry, sleeplessness and every other form of mental break-down. The survivors of our fathers' quieter age show minds less wracked, hearts less wrung; life to-day like its locomotion is so rapid that every stop is sudden and jarring. It is permissible that energy should be

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a matter of more or less, but never of some or none. When the day's work brings, instead of mere fatigue, prostration, it exceeds the day's strength and docks the future. Labour and recess, morning and evening, ought not to vary except in relative degrees of freshness. To overlive is but an insidious overfeeding: it is as incumbent upon us to impose abstemiousness upon the mind as upon the body, and to guard it against excess. A bare sufficiency is the largest capaciousness; what does not nourish is actually injurious. The intestinal mind feeds well but the glutton senses starve. Let us take the timely warning of laziness, uttering as it does satiety's protest against surfeit and proclaiming that we would be left alone: heard is it not by the empty-minded but by the full—heeded is it not by the idle but by the

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wise. Well-watered subsoils need little surface irrigation of novelty.

We lose our way amid the city-streets of mere happenings. The stream of the mind flows through the sands of multiplicity and has difficulty in keeping continuity. Only strength can grasp totals; feebleness gets absorbed in the items. We relish the complex when we are keen enough to rid it of its complexity; but fatigue because it is weary, dullness because it is blunt, craves the obvious. In the maze of reduplication, perception is perplexed; without the aid of abstract concepts we should be unable to arrive at any singleness of idea. Open eyes are empty; surface-finds usually prove valueless. The buzzing fly of phenomena diverts the attention of most men; but in the capacity to bring the scattered parts of experience to-

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gether and weld them into unity, lie both genius and character. Proportion is the very structure of perfection, and a sense of it can alone make a comprehensive mind. The power to summarize is the power to make ours: we must keep everything down to its pertinence. Though attention is exposed to every barbarian trifle, there needs but a small guard of concentration to hold its citadel. The trained eye takes in at a glance: omission proves the expert, and brevity, wisdom. To come at the truth, facts must be abandoned; we cannot stick to the letter of experience. Whitman was no more an artist than an inventory is literature. Behind the minutiae of manifestation lies the meaning: idealism excepts to realism and appeals to reality.

The sea of event fumes at its edge, however still its expanse may lie.

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Pomp and parade attend petty functions more often than notable transactions. Though the world is imposing in circumstance it is usually trivial in aim: its great outward occasions are but trifling occurrences. The elaboration and detail of even commonplace ideas make them so superficially dazzling as to hide their miserable shallowness. Life suffers from over-activity rather than from inertia; there is a greater disposition to do the wrong thing than to do nothing. Restiveness is a steed that starts before thought is fairly in the saddle; the energetic prefer a certainty though false to the uncertainty of truth. We usually impute to men better motives for their acts than for their inaction; the reverse, however, would more often conform to fact. It is a fortunate provision of nature that visits excess with weariness and damp-

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ens incompetency with indolence, thereby rendering them harmless. The doings of the day are for the most part the mere workings of the yeast; and their record is of no importance except as testifying to the ferment. Generally speaking, bodily activity is in inverse ratio to mental: the little-minded must always be about something, but the large outlook is still. Only leisure is formative; the flood-gates of thought do not open till quiet comes. Those moments that suddenly crystallize into clearness overtake none but the quiescent.

Let us cease to be busy that we may at last get to work. The activities that are filled with the exhilaration of accomplishment do not often accomplish much: the unrest of most lives is but the pendulum-swing of one or another excess of motion. Work is seldom

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according to its seeming; and labour is its least laborious form. To be human is the busiest of all occupations. The average man regards definite transactions dealing with the material means of subsistence as a far more serious affair than undefined employment having to do with the processes and beauties of life itself (the very dogs are suspicious of a loiterer); yet how much more transcending in consequence, more strenuous in accomplishment is the latter. Even when we merely look on and contemplate, we fulfil a necessary function and one that is in many cases more important than participation itself. To dream is to keep the sweetest tryst and to be faithful to a foreordained rendezvous; it puts the motion of privilege and comes at once to the real business of life. External variety, such as change of scene, excitement and the like, are

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often injurious because enabling one without ennui to remain spiritually the same; whereas circumstantial sameness forces one in very self-refreshment to change within. It will always be found that travellers do not enlarge inwardly as much as the sedentary expand by study.

Reality overpowers the imagination with particulars and stifles it with local colour; the picture is obliterated by the crowd of impressions. From a first glance we get but a general idea, and at the second, notice mere details; only then is it that we observe the parts as a whole, as well as the whole in its parts. The day fills itself with its inevitable inflow, and vision is quickly submerged; all life looks jaded upon its thronged thoroughfare. From the *mélée* of circumstance creative genius has ever had to go forth: contempla-

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tion is a cat that roams when all the senses are asleep. As the food that strengthens also dulls, so is it difficult to obtain the material for art without at the same time forfeiting the conditions of its artistic treatment. Yet conversely the very occasions that thus preclude expression also prompt it; inspiration is not as infrequent as the opportunity to take advantage of it. By fleeing prosaic circumstances we are likely to forego poetic suggestion. Time always seems to be either too full or too empty for utterance. Silence has but the negative virtue of exclusion, and mere isolation is self-filled; as the city can only intimate, so the country can only elaborate. The one point of vantage is where quiet comes closest to the thick of life. The world does not pass us in review unless we pass it in review; creative seclusion is but a step removed from the street.

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Only in the metropolitan proportions of life are the petty and the personal suppressed: it is by keeping time empty but interest filled, by having the world accessible to us but ourselves not to it, that we obtain the true mixture of living. The drama of event is best seen from the background, for the audience itself is part of the spectacle. To know rather than to be known is happiness—albeit men ever seek to be known rather than knowing. Let us rejoice at the customary retirement of our lot, seeing that all commanding locations are exposed to the winds.

Life is complication, art simplification. Except we disentangle existence we cannot see its drift or restore its gusto. Only analysis discovers what is amiss: totality can never tell. In the *potpourri* of experience the individual flavour of its ingre-

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dients is lost: taste is blinded by a blend; by resolving into its parts, however, we obtain an explanation. Singleness is the bold pencil that with a mere stroke conveys its meaning; but complexity blurs the effect with intricate detail. What one misses in the bulk, he finds in the specimen, where it is easier to get at; the thought must indeed be small that cannot expand its notes. Not only are the lessons of experience as well learned from little things as from large, but better, because they are more often repeated, and more impressively, because not derived from the exceptional. Unless we husk ideas of their surplusage, we cannot partake of them: hence the clarification incidental to dealing with matters at a distance, whereby separation eliminates the environment that obscures. Whatever we make trans-

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parent to truth is transfigured. Things in their purity are a pleasure—it is only the needless adjuncts that annoy. Whenever essentials act upon sensitiveness, the effect is beauty, the product poetry; sweeter is the silence of the mind's own musing than all the symphony of instrumentation. The terrace of spirituality keeps the highway of offence out of sight: every real home is a refuge from the inessential. Dignity of character is like unto a darkened house whose cool and quiet seclusion comes of windows shuttered against the outside glare and noise.

All self-limitation is selective; the body-guard of life is picked from the flower of its troops. When we take little luggage we have only what we want. The past packs its wisdom in proverbs—full-weighted, fit for travel. Abbreviation is expressive, and condens-

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sation gains in weight: to cut thought is to get the sparkle of its diamond. How precious is time when short: days when numbered begin to be well spent. All summaries clarify—farewells review life and attempt reparation; danger raises the quality of conduct.

Through the fine mesh of memory, experience is strained of its coarseness and so made easier of assimilation. From the past we learn the lessons of the present; the enjoyment of most incidents is in retrospect. The far-off fog is the sun-lit cloud: the dead belie their meanness. It is chiefly the nobleness of former times that survives to shame these: history preserves its prowess as if for example. Among the remoter phases of existence where garish actuality cannot so easily dispel it, sentiment takes refuge—all old days are the good old days. Lost

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causes are hot-beds of romance; the fate of the fallen prince has ever been espoused by the chivalric. In long stalactites of beauty time reflects its illumined shores.

Incontrovertible testimony to our character is borne by the harvest of our retentiveness; for its seed is attention. How tell-tale are the topics we broach, the impressions we describe, the incidents we relate. Where recollection rings hollow, perception ran shallow. There is in the soul a remoteness that is not distance, a gulf that no backward glance can bridge. All that sensibility let slip is retrospectively lost; but all that it seized is an inseparable possession. With what treasures were not the galleries of the mind filled, had its acquisitions always been of the best.

Memory is the one pressed flower

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that never fades. The past is not only telescopically near, but microscopically enlarged; by middle age its accumulations encroach upon any fresh accretion of experience. On the surface of the mind's mirror, the moment is a mere mist; one would get little nourishment from the event without the cud of recollection. We work up the canvas of presence in the studio of absence. No packet of other days is opened but some still-living thought falls out. With what vivid recall speak the jottings of our note-book—theirs is a conjury of revival little suspected by the random item: life leaps out to us once more from the captor page. In the amber of thought the fly of circumstance lies embalmed. Every reminder restores an extinct world; the geologic rock of recollection retains an ineffaceable record of the past. We cannot take out

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a pin without unpinning all attendant circumstances: every extant structure contains in its corner-stone the contemporaneousness of its foundation. Even in abstract contemplation, bits of environment will be found embedded. There is no repetition but opens the sluices of time: the recurrent act or circumstance is a pedestal of enduring memory. To be associated with everyday details of existence is to be ensured against oblivion; hence the intimate character of love's gifts.

Things appear ever less real the more we realize them: after our first acquaintance with it, the world never seems actual. Under a wider touch we grow less sensitive, and become apathetic toward an over-extended contact. Though expansion adds interests, it takes away interest in them. Likewise it is only first experiences that rack—all

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repetitions are the later children of easier birth; beyond every pass of endeavour lies an effortless descent. Early conditions are the sole credible ones: all men are dazed by this thing that age does to them: we instinctively think of ourselves as more essentially what we were than what we are. The reminiscences that cleave time and lay bare the by-gone seem not only to revert but to reveal. Childhood's portraits remain to us ever the truest. Those that knew us in infancy or obscurity never realize though they concede our fame; the former self is always stored up against its every later change. In memory most amendments are lost—the original motion remains; by a lapse of thought we often carry out a first intention, utterly forgetting some reconsideration and alteration of it. Few are the impres-

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sions of after years that accompany us far, whereas those of youth are ineradicable.

Day by day the coasts of retrospect recede further, yet come but the more conspicuously into sight: experience piles ever layer upon layer, yet the earlier become only the more accessible. We are as dancers that through every change in the music hold to the same step, never ceasing to expect a recurrence of the original rhythm. So continuously potent are first influences that it is not hyperbole but simple fact that mothers control the destiny of mankind. Forces of which it is no longer conscious ceaselessly mould the soul. Character is a seaworthiness whose lines are laid down upon the ways of childhood.

## FAR HORIZONS

ONLY the unuttered thoughts retain their full expansiveness; expression belittles. The best qualified are always the most chary of positive statement. Though words clothe, they also cloak; to make definite both limits meaning and, by raising points of disputation, detracts from it. All literalism silences the overtones of the idea; our glimpses are more extensive than our sight. Rarely do the accurate arrive at great truths. The minutiae of knowledge war against its width; minds stuffed with facts are not nourished by them.

Wonder is the language where words fail. Thought pierces but the surface

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strata of truth, and the plummet of philosophy goes little deeper. If we reached the ultimate reason we could not state it; the first cause is necessarily inexpressible. Men can still be garrulous over piecemeal beauty—its effulgence, however, says the final word and leaves them speechless. Perfection rests its case. The doubtful is argumentative, but talk drops into silence when truth arrives.

The mind feels richer if it does not compute its wealth: sensitiveness shrinks from exposure and deep sentiment balks at any exhibition of itself. More impressive is a single large unit than any number of smaller units that equal it. The year is longer than its total of days. Contrary to expectation, sums stated in francs seem smaller than their equivalent in pounds. It is not the quick tick of the second hand

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that makes us realize the flight of time, but rather the slow passage of the hours.

Context limits: an isolated statement contains all it will hold, but a connected one expands only as far as its neighbours will let it. Into silence we may read anything we wish. Latent disapproval, because of its lack of specification, is felt distributively; protests are most effective when unspoken. Every definite occupation deprives us of the privilege of changing our fundamental convictions. We can no longer run with the hare of individuality when we hunt with the hounds of convention. Even superficial indicia of social or professional position—such as attire, housing, place of business, repute—tend to colour our conduct with their implied standards and to confine our thought within the limits they set. Likewise we

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become prisoners to our words when once we have committed our ideas to them, and no longer retain the creative power that can correct them; the formulation of our mere tentativeness assumes an unintended finality. All media and forms of expression are hindrances, and we can only reduce their harmfulness by choosing the freest; the real technique is not to be acquired by the technical but only by such as are surcharged with the spirit that through it seeks outlet.

All flux of form stimulates the imagination because, like chaos, full of infinite possibility. There are no sails upon the sea equal to the clouds, no stream as beautiful as that of flowing time. Only when the eye is vague does the retina of the mind picture sharp; we intensify impressions by closing the eyes. Yearning proves deficient in

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specification and receives its solace from other sources than it had expected: the perfection which youth hoped to find, converts itself into an ideal to be dreamed of, a heaven to be looked forward to. The transcription of any one scene or experience can never be a legitimate field for art, whose conceptions are necessarily composite, supplying the deficiency of each life by rounding out living. Each one's idea of heaven is the supplement of his unrealized earth.

Whatever baffles, incites us: we demand entrance wherever we are debarred. Credulity is the sole remaining sea of mystery. The curtained contains the impossible, and secrecy confirms any theory that will account for it. Heights covered by clouds are surely snow-capped; just over the edge of every hope lies Elysia. We were as

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credulous as the ancients under their provocation; sensationalism is the modern form of superstition. In the absence of certitude the fury of the unbridled imagination breaks forth: yet a drop of cooling definiteness allays the fever at once. How quickly the actual facts of the matter restore life to the norm.

Interest in the day lasts only until its possibilities fade—its freshness passes only with ours: now screams the noon and puts the morn to flight. Unless our words suggest the unsaid, they say nothing: things that thrill can only be implied. The hearer adds the idea that terrifies or delights; his the world of meaning he attributes to the word that awakened it. Woman does not share the dream, nor man the ideal, of which each is to the other the embodiment; the peculiar graciousness

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ascribed to the beloved is the chrism of the lover. Romance is its own environment. All hills and horizons are haunted, and every bay is the refuge of buccaneers.

We do not realize how much of the world is self-made, nor, until we subside, perceive the oft-times tawdriness of the tinsel that dazzled us. One has but to hush his music and extinguish his lights to reduce the brilliant scene to grayness. How serious turn the gay if they do but pause—just as one seems to escape from locality and obtain immunity from the moment as long as he keeps going, yet to sink into their mire again the instant he stops; and as all men feel an emancipation in mere speed. The bare walls of existence are scarcely recognizable if our bric-à-brac and miscellany of ornamentation are removed; what were the landscape

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of life without our spiritual atmosphere? The charm of the climate is imputed to the country; we cannot believe that the glow of early life was due solely to our dreams. Are these indeed the romantic persons of our young enthusiasm, these that now go their prosaic way of maturity? Whither is the erewhile spring in our steps upon this same path? Coldly the elder eyes behold the hotfoot of youth; our former motives become incomprehensible. Quickly indeed would the world be dashed upon the rocks of unreality were its helm in the hand of youth-illusioned pilots.

Opportunity sobers longing. Objects while yet unseen seem nearer than when at last they come into sight. Let us not go too close for effect; all meetings dissipate some sentiment or destroy some ideal. On board the ship

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her lines are not visible; patriotism flourishes best outside the capital. Life is a music heard most sweetly at a distance, where it blends. On the return of long-absent friends it is often difficult to identify one's idealizing remembrance of them with the reality. Our conception of one another grows more distinctive in separation: correspondence proves to be the closer touch. The mind by an acquired momentum goes on with the persons from whom it parts; and we are accompanied on a journey not by those that travel with us, but by those that remain behind.

Fear and hope discount every possibility: the anticipated has already happened. To the lively fancy, experience is a continual relief or disappointment, for few pains or pleasures equal their foretaste. Nothing is so beautiful or so dreadful but it has been outpictured:

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the event is surprisingly neutral. By the time the imaginative get to the living of it, the gusto of life is gone. Dwelling on the deed palsies the doing of it: the preparations we make for a great occasion usually end in taking the wind out of action's sails and in leaving the hand lifeless. Imagination lives a continuous anti-climax.

Dread pertains to the unknown. We shrink from the short, sharp moment of pain because we do not know its limits; but fear subsides when we know the worst. In every anxiety we turn for reassurance to those that have gone before us. Ignorance and inexperience have a hundred fears that wisdom is spared; the aspen leaf of apprehension trembles in a breeze perceptible to itself alone. We are more startled at a false alarm than at a true, because if there is need for action, the

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nerves feel no shock of reaction. It is chiefly threatened ills that make us miserable: what we have once incorporated into our outlook is thereafter a matter of indifference. Nervous people make a practice of anticipating the worst, so that whatever happens they shall have outfelt it. The expected has no shock.

The pleasures of the imagination are keenest, for, being free from the disturbance of contiguous circumstance, they enjoy a completeness that is missing in those afforded by active life. The bare idea serves the experienced for reality: as we advance, we sing more within. Participation is necessarily flurried by performance, so that from any eventful experience the full realization of its meaning is absent. Of the impressions it sought how shorn is travel, because of its incidentals.

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No white light of fact is as beautiful as its refracted or reflected rays; there is a charm in the cultivated landscapes of imaginative creation that the primal scene lacks. Literature is a moonlight that casts a spell over life.

Though man is immured in the four walls of his five senses, he roams the universe. Life everywhere presses beyond environment: all idealism gazes out to sea. No game that gives more than fleeting glimpses of itself is worthy of the sportsman; the truth-seeker shoots on the wing. Ever a frontiersman is faith, dwelling on the fringe of fact's settlements. Humanity scales the ringed horizon of its whereabouts and crowds into each fresh territory opened up.

We are never really disillusioned, but disappointment only lodges its hopes elsewhere: idealization brooks no long

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suspense. In default of perfection it puts up with approximations, and however visible may be the clay feet it does not intermit its worship. The Germany of our student days, the America of our freedom, must still be somewhere in existence, though we are forced to posit them upon the stars. Unending is the search for El Dorado.

The Oceanica of the beyond confutes all sceptics: every spiritual navigator reports it—only stay-at-home materialists are incredulous. Though its coast-lines remain uncharted, no lands are so well authenticated: man is in closer and more frequent commerce with the unrealized world than with the actual about him. Of what life does not the desire lie on the other side of some Jordan of separation? Consciousness is in continuous migration elsewhither: to depict dreams is the

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province of art. Though each day is an expedition, yet there are ever unexplored regions left. Only against a glorified horizon is existence sharply outlined. Earth remains stoically dull to the illumination of the west, but the far-seeing skies are fired.

## THE UNCIRCUMSTANCED SOUL

THE mind, having its own environment, pursues a different course from that of the body. It looks one way but sees another; it sits here but thinks there. The chair is a journey. Others imagine us to be mentally occupied as circumstances or speech would indicate—yet so is it seldom. The immediate holds us but for a moment; our response reveals a circuit of thought since the remark that evoked it. It may often be that those who do not know enough to come in out of the rain, know too much to do so. Firmly planted are the feet of him

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alone whose head is in the clouds. We must avert the gaze from what we would behold. The mind swerves off from anything it faces and must squint to see. Attention perceives when it turns its back: in memory is the scene, outside the concert-room the music. We walk the unconscious side of things and look across.

Every absence from the desk solves its difficulties. It is between the closing and the opening of our office that most of our work is done: the saunter is swifter than the stride. By indirection the purpose accomplishes itself. Without momentary pretence it is often impossible to give a permanently true impression. Comprehensiveness and therefore comprehension must always be at the cost of apparent coherence. So many are the ramifications of truth that the mind's uncurbed sequence of them

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necessarily leads to a point where we forget what we were thinking or talking about. The straying of attention, the rambling of thought, the flight of imagination—all these are a larger freedom of the same sense of association and relevancy that under closer rein imposes concentration.

Silence baffles, whereas any answer is a clew: what the word conceals, the tone tells. Others do not notice what we hide, but only our hiding it. There is no such effective subterfuge as openness: we suspect only what is done furtively. It is the overheard remark, the stricken-out word that piques attention: from what people let fall we piece out the disclosure. Sight's directness meets obstacles that sound's deviation avoids; all hear the sunset-gun, few see the flag drop.

Because implying general knowledge

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or acceptance, an incidental allusion is felt to concede more than any direct mention states. Where such tribute to Napoleon's greatness as the prestige accruing to Britain through his overthrow? Criticism is always the shadow of praise—it is insignificance alone that escapes comment. The most galling of all offences is neglect; no studied exclusion cuts like the mere failure to include. Any positive antagonism arouses healthy scorn, but from negative indifference we get no reaction to dispel its chill.

It is not conditions that count, but our own condition: all's well when we are. One constantly falls into the error of attributing his inspired moment to the place, and thinks to repeat its occurrence by perpetuating its occasion. The transfiguration turns out to have been no event of environment,

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however, but one of universal setting that needs not the vowing of any temple of permanence to the spot. Everywhere the spiritually fair days are infrequent, and there will always be some inclemency to ruffle the smooth seeming of perfection. We shall discover no other continent of life except the better cultivation of this one, no new heaven until there is a new earth. The time spent in outward search were better spent in inward finding.

Beneath the troubled surface of the objective world, the mind swims in the clear waters of truth. Surroundings cease to concern as purpose becomes serious. For their better enactment mental operations seek out spaces from which the world is excluded: counting-rooms, studios, offices furnish no incitement other than opportunity—

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like a deck swept for action, so grim is the desk of the great. The engrossed attention is as unconscious of time or whereabouts as is sleep; where the soul is full, the universe is empty. Vital thought is unenvironed, illustrious deeds uncircumstanced: the drama of reality is acted without stage-setting. Careless of occasion are the doughty, and awaiting no mediacy: life at high pitch rests lightly on earth. As oft as the heroic or poetic fire enters the soul, the sky cracks, the scene falls asunder and men are revealed as great protagonists in a world of their own conjuring.

All spots are sky-touched, not merely the horizon. The dream sets up its Jacob's ladder wheresoever. We have but to open up communications to be in touch. Our familiar street is a sun-riviera. The great spiritual presences do not so much as require us to

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go to them: they come to us whenever our hospitality calls. God will walk in my garden in the cool of my spiritual day.







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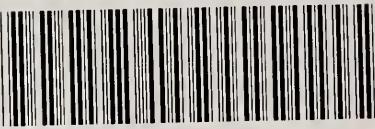
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